







# FROM BEOWULF TO THOMAS HARDY

TEXTS SELECTED AND EDITED  
BY  
ROBERT SHAFER, P.H.D.

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OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL,  
UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI



REVISED EDITION

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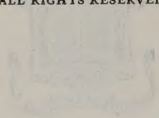
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# CONTENTS

*Rearranged according to Types*

Those who conduct the introductory course in literature by means of a survey of typical forms may find the following list useful. In it the contents of the two volumes of this work are arranged according to types, with references to volumes and pages.

*From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy* contains texts—in nearly all cases complete pieces—designed to illustrate the course of English literature from its beginning to the present day. To carry out this design, the texts are arranged chronologically, with historical and critical introductions. Both the amount of material and the kind of material included were determined by the belief that students should form a sound conception of English literature as a whole and in its historical development.

Whether English literature is being studied historically or by types, the chronological arrangement is, we believe, the most satisfactory. In itself it insures something of the historical perspective essential in any study of literature. And, besides, the classification of literature by types is always and of necessity a fluid and approximate matter. Many methods are equally possible, and for various purposes different methods are best. No classification by types is likely to suit two teachers equally well; for, even when there is agreement as to the best or most useful method for a specific purpose, there is still room for many differences of opinion as to the place within a system of classification where a given piece of literature is to be put. Probably no one has ever looked through a classified list without at once seeing what he considered serious mistakes of judgment. *From Beowulf to Thomas Hardy* enables teachers to make their own classifications in accordance with their own judgment and in accordance with the needs of their own students.

The following arrangement by types is intended as a suggestion for this purpose. We hope that it may be practically useful, and to this end strict consistency has been sacrificed for what we venture to call common sense. Some types of literature are important and significant for their form, others for their method, and others for their content. We have tried to distinguish important types, regardless of the system of classification which any one taken by itself might suggest as appropriate for the whole body of literature.

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FROM BEOWULF TO THOMAS HARDY

VOLUME II





## RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN (1751-1816)

Sheridan's father was an actor and theater-manager in Dublin when the future dramatist and statesman was born there on 30 October, 1751. In 1758, the Dublin Theater Royal no longer prospering in the hands of the elder Sheridan, he went to England, where he became a teacher of elocution. His son was left at school in Dublin, and only joined his parents a year and a half later. He never returned to the city of his birth. In 1762 he entered Harrow, and remained there until 1768. His further education was received from a private tutor, and he also was taught fencing and riding. In 1770 the Sheridans settled in Bath, and Richard became busy with varied and light-hearted efforts to make his way in literature. He also became attached to Elizabeth Linley who, young though she was, had already become well known as a concert-singer, and was besieged by many admirers. To escape the attentions and threats of a disgraceful rake, whose pursuit of her was becoming notorious, she now determined to go secretly to France and take refuge, at least for the time-being, in a convent. Sheridan undertook to see her safely into France, and off they went;—but, reaching an understanding with each other, instead of proceeding to a convent they went through a form of marriage before a French priest. They themselves seem to have understood this as a solemn betrothal rather than as a marriage, and what really it was nobody knows. Meanwhile, however, the families of both parties to this escapade were excited, and Miss Linley's father hastened after his daughter and brought her back to England. Upon his return Sheridan fought two duels with Miss Linley's persecutor, being seriously wounded at the second encounter. And his family, in an unsuccessful effort to break Miss Linley's spell, sent him off to Waltham Abbey in Essex, where he spent the winter of 1772-1773 in retirement and study. In April, 1773, he entered the Middle Temple, and in the same month he married Miss Linley with her father's consent.

Money now became an imperative need, and Sheridan wrote much, though he published nothing over his own name. He also turned his thoughts towards the theater, and in 1774 rapidly composed *The Rivals*, which was accepted at Covent Garden. It was performed on 17 January, 1775—and was an evident failure. The trouble lay partly in the acting, and it was decided that with some revision of the text and a change in one of the parts it might yet succeed. Accordingly it was performed again on 28 January, and

this time with complete success. It has remained to the present day one of the most popular of English comedies, and one of the most discussed, so that a large literature has grown around it. The play, composed with a remarkable mastery of stagecraft, was an attack upon the weakly sentimental comedy which flourished in the eighteenth century. With this aim, Sheridan looked to the comedy of manners as it had been developed in the last quarter of the seventeenth century by Etherege, Farquhar, Congreve, and others, and benefited largely by their example. Efforts, however, to trace his sources exactly have resulted in so many and such divergent suggestions that only one conclusion may be regarded as definitely established—the conclusion that, while Sheridan made use of types which have had a long history on the stage, and succeeded in converting much traditional matter into a brilliantly satirical comedy of the manners of his own day, still, he was on the whole very little indebted to his predecessors for the actual details of his plot and characterization.

Spurred on by his great success in his first venture, Sheridan next wrote a farce, *St. Patrick's Day*, for the benefit of the actor who had done most for *The Rivals*; and immediately proceeded to compose a comic opera, *The Duenna*, which was performed at Covent Garden on 21 November, 1775. Its popularity was unprecedented on the English stage, and Sheridan not unreasonably thought that his fortune was as good as made. In 1776 he became the manager of Drury Lane Theater in succession to David Garrick, but, though he continued for many years to control the play-house, he proved incompetent to succeed with the venture, and in the end found it a source of misfortune. There *The School for Scandal*—more finished, though less sympathetic than *The Rivals*—was performed on 8 May, 1777; and there also was performed his witty farce, *The Critic*, on 29 October, 1779. In addition to these plays, Sheridan compiled several adaptations from older English or foreign originals, the last of which, *Pizarro*, was performed in May, 1779. Meanwhile he had become a social favorite and had been for many years a prominent member of Parliament. In 1777 he had become a member of the Literary Club, and in 1780 he had been elected to the House of Commons (pledged to support Charles James Fox) by Stafford. In the House he won a high reputation as an orator, and steadily supported what would now be called liberal

ism—opposing the war against the American colonies, defending the freedom of the press, and aiding various reforms such as the abatement of the severity of the game laws. He also became the friend and adviser of the Prince of Wales; and was one of the managers of the impeachment of Warren Hastings. It was in the course of one of his great speeches on this occasion that he referred to Gibbon's "luminous page." Report had it that afterwards, when reminded of this, he explained that he must have intended to

say "voluminous." His wife died in June, 1792, while the trial of Hastings was still in progress. He married a second time in April, 1795. His misfortunes with Drury Lane and his own extravagance finally so lowered his income that in 1812 he could not bear the expense of an election, and so lost his seat in Parliament. He was then a broken man, and was, indeed, imprisoned for debt in 1813. He died in London on 7 July, 1816, and was buried in the poet's corner in Westminster Abbey.

## THE RIVALS

A COMEDY (1775)

### PREFACE

A PREFACE to a play seems generally to be considered as a kind of closet-prologue, in which—if his piece has been successful—the author solicits that indulgence from the reader which he had before experienced from the audience. But as the scope and immediate object of a play is to please a mixed assembly in representation (whose judgment in the theater at least is decisive), its degree of reputation is usually as determined by the public before it can be prepared for the cooler tribunal of the study. Thus any farther solicitude on the part of the writer becomes unnecessary at least, if not an intrusion; and if the piece has been condemned in the performance, I fear an address to the closet, like an appeal to posterity, is constantly regarded as the procrastination of a suit from a consciousness of the weakness of the cause. From these considerations, the following comedy would certainly have been submitted to the reader without any further introduction than what it had in the representation, but that its success has probably been founded on a circumstance which the author is informed has not before attended a theatrical trial, and which consequently ought not to pass unnoticed.

I need scarcely add that the circumstance alluded to was the withdrawing of the piece, to remove those imperfections in the first representation which were too obvious to escape reprehension and too numerous to admit of a hasty correction. There are few writers, I believe, who, even in the fullest consciousness of error, do not wish to palliate the faults which they acknowledge; and, however trifling the performance, to second their confession of its deficiencies by whatever plea

seems least disgraceful to their ability. In the present instance, it cannot be said to amount either to candor or modesty in me, to acknowledge an extreme inexperience and want of judgment on matters in which, without guidance from practice or spur from success, a young man should scarcely boast of being an adept. If it be said that under such disadvantages no one should attempt to write a play, I must beg leave to dissent from the position, while the first point of experience that I have gained on the subject is a knowledge of the candor and judgment with which an impartial public distinguishes between the errors of inexperience and incapacity, and the indulgence which it shows even to a disposition to remedy the defects of either.

It were unnecessary to enter into any farther extenuation of what was thought exceptionable in this play, but that it has been said that the managers should have prevented some of the defects before its appearance to the public—and in particular the uncommon length of the piece as represented the first night. It were an ill return for the most liberal and gentlemanly conduct on their side, to suffer any censure to rest where none was deserved. Hurry in writing has long been exploded as an excuse for an author; however, in the dramatic line, it may happen that both an author and a manager may wish to fill a chasm in the entertainment of the public with a hastiness not altogether culpable. The season was advanced when I first put the play into Mr. Harris's<sup>1</sup> hands: it was at that time at least double the length of any acting comedy. I profited by his judgment and experience in the curtailment of it—till, I believe, his feeling for the vanity of a young author got the better of his desire for correct-

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Harris, manager of Covent Garden Theater.



ness, and he left many excrescences remaining because he had assisted in pruning so many more. Hence, though I was not uninformed that the acts were still too long, I flattered myself that, after the first trial, I might with safer judgment proceed to remove what should appear to have been most dissatisfactory. Many other errors there were which might in part have arisen from my being by no means conversant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theater. Yet I own that, in one respect, I did not regret my ignorance; for as my first wish in attempting a play was to avoid every appearance of plagiarism, I thought I should stand a better chance of effecting this from being in a walk which I had not frequented, and where consequently the progress of invention was less likely to be interrupted by starts of recollection. For on subjects on which the mind has been much informed, invention is slow of exerting itself. Faded ideas float in the fancy like half-forgotten dreams, and the imagination in its fullest enjoyments becomes suspicious of its offspring and doubts whether it has created or adopted.

With regard to some particular passages which on the first night's representation seemed generally disliked, I confess that if I felt any emotion of surprise at the disapprobation, it was not that they were disapproved of, but that I had not before perceived that they deserved it. As some part of the attack on the piece was begun too early to pass for the sentence of *judgment*, which is ever tardy in condemning, it has been suggested to me that much of the disapprobation must have arisen from virulence of malice rather than severity of criticism; but as I was more apprehensive of there being just grounds to excite the latter than conscious of having deserved the former, I continue not to believe that probable which I am sure must have been unprovoked. However, if it was so and I could even mark the quarter from whence it came, it would be ungenerous to retort; for no passion suffers more than malice from disappointment. For my own part, I see no reason why the author of a play should not regard a first night's audience as a candid and judicious friend attending, in behalf of the public, at his last rehearsal. If he can dispense with flattery, he is sure at least of sincerity, and even though the annotation be

rude, he may rely upon the justness of the comment. Considered in this light, that audience, whose *fiat* is essential to the poet's claim whether his object be fame or profit, has surely a right to expect some deference to its opinion, from principles of politeness at least, if not from gratitude.

As for the little puny critics, who scatter their peevish strictures in private circles, and scribble at every author who has the eminence of being unconnected with them, as they are usually spleen-swollen from a vain idea of increasing their consequence, there will always be found a petulance and illiberality in their remarks which should place them as far beneath the notice of a gentleman as their original dullness had sunk them from the level of the most unsuccessful author.

It is not without pleasure that I catch at an opportunity of justifying myself from the charge of intending any national reflection in the character of Sir Lucius O'Trigger. If any gentlemen opposed the piece from that idea, I thank them sincerely for their opposition; and if the condemnation of this comedy (however misconceived the provocation) could have added one spark to the decaying flame of national attachment to the country supposed to be reflected on, I should have been happy in its fate and might with truth have boasted that it had done more real service in its failure than the successful morality of a thousand stage-novels will ever effect.

It is usual, I believe, to thank the performers in a new play for the exertion of their several abilities. But where (as in this instance) their merit has been so striking and uncontroverted as to call for the warmest and truest applause from a number of judicious audiences, the poet's after-praise comes like the feeble acclamation of a child to close the shouts of a multitude. The conduct, however, of the principals in a theater cannot be so apparent to the public.—I think it therefore but justice to declare that from this theater (the only one I can speak of from experience) those writers who wish to try the dramatic line will meet with that candor and liberal attention which are generally allowed to be better calculated to lead genius into excellence than either the precepts of judgment or the guidance of experience.

THE AUTHOR

## PROLOGUE

*Enter Sergeant-at-Law, and Attorney following, and giving a paper.*

SERGEANT. What's here!—a vile cramp hand! I cannot see  
Without my spectacles.

ATTORNEY. He means his fee.  
Nay, Mr. Sergeant, good sir, try again.

(*Gives money*) 10  
SERGEANT. The scrawl improves! (*Gives more*) Oh, come, 'tis pretty plain.

Hey! how's this? The Poet's Brief again.  
O ho!

Cast, I suppose?

ATTORNEY. O pardon me—No—No—  
We found the court, o'erlooking stricter laws,  
Indulgent to the merits of the Cause;  
By Judges mild, unused to harsh denial,  
A rule was granted for another trial.

SERGEANT. Then heark'ee, Dibble, did  
you mend your pleadings,

Errors, no few, we've found in our proceedings.

ATTORNEY. Come, courage, sir, we did  
amend our plea,

Hence your new brief, and this refreshing fee.  
Some sons of Phœbus in the courts we meet,

SERGEANT. And fifty sons of Phœbus in  
the Fleet!<sup>1</sup>

ATTORNEY. Nor pleads he worse, who with 30  
a decent sprig

Of bays adorns his legal waste of wig.

SERGEANT. Full-bottomed heroes thus, on  
signs, unfurl

A leaf of laurel in a grove of curl!

Yet tell your client that, in adverse days,

This wig is warmer than a bush of bays.

ATTORNEY. Do you, then, sir, my client's  
place supply,

Profuse of robe and prodigal of tie—

Do you, with all those blushing powers of 40  
face,

And wonted bashful hesitating grace,

Rise in the court and flourish on the case. }

[*Exit.* 45

SERGEANT. For practice then suppose—  
this brief will show it,—

Me, Sergeant Woodward,—council for the  
poet.

Used to the ground—I know 'tis hard to deal 50  
With this dread court, from whence there's  
no appeal;

No tricking here, to blunt the edge of law,

Or, damned in equity, escape by flaw:

But judgment given—your sentence must  
remain;

No writ of error lies—to Drury Lane!

Yet when so kind you seem—'tis past dispute

We gain some favor if not costs of suit.

No spleen is here! I see no hoarded fury—

I think I never faced a milder jury!

Sad else our plight! where frowns are transportation,

A hiss the gallows, and a groan—damnation!

But such the public candor, without fear

My client waives all right of challenge here.

15 No newsman from *our* session is dismissed,

Nor wit nor critic *we* scratch off the list;

His faults can never hurt another's ease,

His crime at worst—a bad attempt to please:

Thus, all respecting, he appeals to all,

20 And by the general voice will stand or fall.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE

25 FAULKLAND

ACRES

SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER

FAG

DAVID

30 THOMAS, a Coachman

MRS. MALAPROP

LYDIA LANGUISH

JULIA

35 LUCY

*Maid, Boy, Servants, etc.*

SCENE: *Bath*

TIME OF ACTION: *Five hours*

## ACT I

SCENE I. *A Street in Bath*

Coachman *crosses the stage; enter FAG, looking after him*

FAG. What! Thomas! sure 'tis he?—  
What! Thomas! Thomas!

COACHMAN. Hey!—Odds life! Mr. FAG!  
—give us your hand, my old fellow-servant.

FAG. Excuse my glove, Thomas.—I'm  
devilish glad to see you, my lad. Why, my  
prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—  
but who the deuce thought of seeing you in  
Bath!

<sup>1</sup>I. e., fifty poets in the debtors' prison.

COACHMAN. Sure, Master, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postilion be all come.

FAG. Indeed!

COACHMAN. Aye, Master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit; so he'd a mind to gi't the slip, and whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

FAG. Aye, aye, hasty in everything or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute!

COACHMAN. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young Master? Odd! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

FAG. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

COACHMAN. Why, sure!

FAG. At present I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

COACHMAN. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

FAG. I have not changed, Thomas.

COACHMAN. No! Why, didn't you say you had left young Master?

FAG. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no farther:—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

COACHMAN. The devil they are!

FAG. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the *ensign* half of my master being on guard at present—the *captain* has nothing to do with me.

COACHMAN. So, so!—What, this is some freak, I warrant!—Do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning o't—you know I ha' trusted you.

FAG. You'll be secret, Thomas?

COACHMAN. As a coach-horse.

FAG. Why, then, the cause of all this is—Love,—Love, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

COACHMAN. Aye, aye;—I guessed there was a lady in the case.—But pray, why does your Master pass only for *ensign*?—now if he had shammed *general* indeed—

FAG. Ah! Thomas, there lies the mystery o' the matter. Hark'ee, Thomas, my Master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste: a lady who likes him better as a *half-pay* *ensign* than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet with three thousand a year.

COACHMAN. That is an odd taste indeed!—But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? Is she rich, hey?

FAG. Rich!—Why, I believe she owns half the stocks! Zounds! Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman! She has a lapdog that eats out of gold,—she feeds her parrot with small pearls,—and all her thread-papers<sup>1</sup> are made of bank-notes!

COACHMAN. Bravo! faith!—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands<sup>2</sup> at least;—but does she draw kindly with the captain?

FAG. As fond as pigeons.

COACHMAN. May one hear her name?

FAG. Miss Lydia Languish.—But there is an old tough aunt in the way—though, by-the-bye, she has never seen my Master—for we got acquainted with Miss while on a visit in Gloucestershire.

COACHMAN. Well—I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony.—But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath?—I ha' heard a deal of it—here's a mort<sup>3</sup> o' merry-making, hey?

FAG. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge.<sup>4</sup> Though at present we are, like other great assemblies, divided into parties—High-roomians and Low-roomians; however, for my part, I have resolved to stand neuter, and so I told Bob Brush at our last committee.

COACHMAN. But what do the folks do here?

FAG. Oh! there are little amusements enough; in the morning we go to the pump-room (though neither my Master nor I drink the waters); after breakfast we saunter on the parades or play a game at billiards; at night we dance. But damn the place, I'm tired of it; their regular hours stupefy me—not a fiddle nor a card after eleven!—However, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties. I'll introduce you there, Thomas—you'll like him much.

COACHMAN. Sure I know Mr. Du-Peigne—you know his Master is to marry Madam Julia.

FAG. I had forgot.—But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must.—Here now—this wig! What the devil do you

<sup>1</sup>Papers folded in creases so as to form separate divisions for different skeins of thread.

<sup>2</sup>A team of six horses, of high value, running into thousands of pounds.

<sup>3</sup>Great deal.

<sup>4</sup>Good place for idlers.



do with a wig, Thomas?—None of the London whips of any degree of *ton*<sup>1</sup> wear wigs now.

COACHMAN. More's the pity! more's the pity, I say.—Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next.—Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the Bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the Box!—but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag; and look'ee, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

FAG. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

COACHMAN. Why, bless you, the gentlemen of they professions ben't all of a mind—for in our village now thoff<sup>2</sup> Jack Gauge, the exciseman, has ta'en to his carrots,<sup>3</sup> there's little Dick the farrier swears he'll never forsake his bob,<sup>4</sup> tho' all the college should appear with their own heads!

FAG. Indeed! well said, Dick!—But hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

COACHMAN. Zooks! 'tis the captain.—Is that the lady with him?

FAG. No! no! that is Madam Lucy, my Master's mistress's maid. They lodge at that house—but I must after him to tell him the news.

COACHMAN. Odd! he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag—

FAG. Good-bye, Thomas. I have an appointment in Gydes' Porch<sup>5</sup> this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. *[Exeunt severally.]*

SCENE II. *A Dressing-Room in MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings*

LYDIA *sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand.*

LUCY, *as just returned from a message*

LUCY. Indeed, ma'am, I transferred half the town in search of it! I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

LYDIA. And could not you get *The Reward*<sup>6</sup> of *Constancy*<sup>6</sup>?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am.

<sup>1</sup>Style.

<sup>2</sup>Though.

<sup>3</sup>Has taken to his own (carrot-colored) hair.

<sup>4</sup>Wig.

<sup>5</sup>The so-called Lower Rooms, giving on the Walks, were kept by a Mr. Gyde.

<sup>6</sup>The novels mentioned in this scene, in satirical allusion to the sentimental fiction of the day, have been identified and discussed by Professor G. H. Nettleton in the Introduction to his edition of Sheridan's *Major Dramas*. ("Athenaeum Press Series." Ginn).

LYDIA. Nor *The Fatal Connection*?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am.

LYDIA. Nor *The Mistakes of the Heart*?

LUCY. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

LYDIA. Heigh-ho! Did you inquire for *The Delicate Distress*?

LUCY. Or, *The Memoirs of Lady Woodford*? Yes, indeed, ma'am. I asked everywhere for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a Christian to read.

LYDIA. Heigh-ho! Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me. She has a most observing thumb and I believe cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes.—Well, child, what have you brought me?

LUCY. Oh! here, ma'am.—*(Taking books from under her cloak and from her pockets)* This is *The Gordian Knot*,—and this *Peregrine Pickle*. Here are *The Tears of Sensibility* and *Humphry Clinker*. This is *The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herself*, and here the second volume of *The Sentimental Journey*.

LYDIA. Heigh-ho!—What are those books by the glass?

LUCY. The great one is only *The Whole Duty of Man*, where I press a few blonds,<sup>7</sup> ma'am.

LYDIA. Very well—give me the *sal volatile*.

LUCY. Is it in a blue cover, ma'am?

LYDIA. My smelling-bottle, you simpleton!

LUCY. Oh, the drops!—here, ma'am.

LYDIA. No note, Lucy?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am—but I have seen a certain person—

LYDIA. What, my Beverley!—Well, Lucy?

LUCY. O ma'am, he looks so desponding and melancholic!

LYDIA. Hold! Lucy—here's someone coming—quick! see who it is. *[Exit LUCY.]*—Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice.

*Re-enter LUCY*

LUCY. Lud! ma'am, here is Miss Melville.

LYDIA. Is it possible!— *[Exit LUCY.]*

<sup>7</sup>Silk laces of two threads, twisted and formed in hexagonal meshes.

Enter JULIA

My dearest Julia, how delighted am I!—  
(Embrace) How unexpected was this happiness!

JULIA. True, Lydia—and our pleasure is the greater.—But what has been the matter?—you were denied to me at first!

LYDIA. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you!—But first inform me what has <sup>10</sup>conjured you to Bath—is Sir Anthony here?

JULIA. He is—we are arrived within this hour—and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

LYDIA. Then before we are interrupted, <sup>15</sup>let me impart to you some of my distress! I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me! My letters have informed you of my whole connection with Beverley, but I have <sup>20</sup>lost him, Julia! My aunt has discovered our intercourse by a note she intercepted and has confined me ever since! Yet, would you believe it? she has absolutely fallen in love with a tall Irish baronet she met one night since <sup>25</sup>she has been here, at Lady Macshuffie's rout.<sup>1</sup>

JULIA. You jest, Lydia!

LYDIA. No, upon my word.—She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she chooses <sup>30</sup>to be known to him;—but it is a *Delia* or a *Celia*, I assure you.

JULIA. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece.

LYDIA. Quite the contrary. Since she has <sup>35</sup>discovered her own frailty, she is become more suspicious of mine.—Then I must inform you of another plague! That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that I protest I shall be teased out of all spirits!

JULIA. Come, come, Lydia, hope the best—Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

LYDIA. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarreled with my poor <sup>45</sup>Beverley just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

JULIA. What was his offense?

LYDIA. Nothing at all!—But, I don't know <sup>50</sup>how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel! And somehow

I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity.—So, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was at that time paying his addresses to another <sup>5</sup>woman.—I signed it *your Friend unknown*, showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vowed I'd never see him more.

JULIA. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

LYDIA. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out. I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

JULIA. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never <sup>10</sup>give you up so. Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign, and you have thirty thousand pounds!

LYDIA. But you know I lose most of my fortune if I marry without my aunt's consent till of age, and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty. Nor could I love the man who would wish to wait <sup>15</sup>a day for the alternative.

JULIA. Nay, this is caprice!

LYDIA. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?—I thought her lover Faulkland had <sup>20</sup>inured her to it.

JULIA. I do not love even *his* faults.

LYDIA. But apropos—you have sent to him, I suppose?

JULIA. Not yet, upon my word—nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath.—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

LYDIA. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress (though under the protection of Sir Anthony); yet have you, for this long year, <sup>40</sup>been the slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

JULIA. Nay, you are wrong entirely. We were contracted before my father's death.—*That*, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish.—He is too generous <sup>50</sup>to trifle on such a point—and for his character, you wrong him there, too.—No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness.—Unused to the fop-

<sup>1</sup>Large social gathering, assembly.

pery of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover—but being unhackneyed in the passion, his love is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every thought and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his.—Yet, though his pride calls for this full return—his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him which should entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough.—This temper, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours, but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardor of his love.

LYDIA. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him.—But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are?—Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

JULIA. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet surely that alone were an obligation sufficient.

LYDIA. Obligation!—why, a water spaniel would have done as much!—Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!

JULIA. Come, Lydia, you are too inconsiderate.

LYDIA. Nay, I do but jest—What's here?

*Enter LUCY in a hurry*

LUCY. O ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute just come home with your aunt.

LYDIA. They'll not come here.—Lucy, do you watch. *[Exit LUCY.]*

JULIA. Yet I must go.—Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me as she chooses with her select words so ingeniously *misapplied*, without being *mispronounced*.

*Re-enter LUCY*

LUCY. O lud! ma'am, they are both coming upstairs.

LYDIA. Well, I'll not detain you, coz.—Adieu, my dear Julia; I'm sure you are in

haste to send to Faulkland.—There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

JULIA. Adieu! *(Embrace)* *[Exit.]*

LYDIA. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books. Quick, quick!—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the closet—put *The Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*—thrust *Lord Aimworth* under the sofa—cram *Ovid* behind the bolster—there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket—so, so—now lay *Mrs. Chapone* in sight, and leave *Fordyce's Sermons* open on the table.

LUCY. Oh, burn it, ma'am! the hair-dresser has torn away as far as *Proper Pride*.

LYDIA. Never mind—open at *Sobriety*.—Fling me *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*.—Now for 'em! *[Exit LUCY.]*

*Enter MRS. MALAPROP, and SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE*

MRS. MALAPROP. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton who wants to disgrace her family and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

LYDIA. Madam, I thought you once—

MRS. MALAPROP. You thought, miss!—I don't know any business you have to think at all—thought does not become a young woman; the point we would request of you is that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

LYDIA. Ah, madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

MRS. MALAPROP. But I say it is, miss; there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget if a person chooses to set about it.—I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed—and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

SIR ANTHONY. Why, sure she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not!—aye, this comes of her reading!

LYDIA. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

MRS. MALAPROP. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you promise to do as you're bid?—Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?



LYDIA. Madam, I must tell you plainly that had I no preference for anyone else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

MRS. MALAPROP. What business have you, miss, with *preference* and *aversion*? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little *aversion*. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a black-a-moor—and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

LYDIA. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

MRS. MALAPROP. Take yourself to your room.—You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humors.

LYDIA. Willingly, ma'am—I cannot change for the worse. *[Exit.]*

MRS. MALAPROP. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

SIR ANTHONY. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am,—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by heavens! I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet!

MRS. MALAPROP. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

SIR ANTHONY. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes with marbled covers!—From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

MRS. MALAPROP. Those are vile places, indeed!

SIR ANTHONY. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree, of diabolical knowledge!—It blossoms through the year!—And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, but Sir Anthony, your wife, Lady Absolute, was fond of books.

SIR ANTHONY. Aye—and injury sufficient they were to her, madam—but were I to choose another helpmate, the extent of her erudition should consist in knowing her simple

letters, without their mischievous combinations;—and the summit of her science be—her ability to count as far as twenty.—The first, Mrs. Malaprop, would enable her to work A. A. upon my linen;—and the latter would be quite sufficient to prevent her giving me a shirt No. 1, and a stock No. 2.

MRS. MALAPROP. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically!

SIR ANTHONY. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation now, what would you have a woman know?

MRS. MALAPROP. Observe me, Sir Anthony. I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman. For instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments.—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not misspell and mispronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying.—This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you, though I must confess that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question.—But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

MRS. MALAPROP. None, I assure you.—I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly.—He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had

the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

MRS. MALAPROP. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

SIR ANTHONY. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas “Jack to do this”;—if he demurred, I knocked him down—and if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations;—and I hope you will represent *her* to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

SIR ANTHONY. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently.—Well, I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl.—Take my advice—keep a tight hand; if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about. [Exit.]

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, at any rate I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition.—She has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger—sure, Lucy can't have betrayed me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton I should have made her confess it.—(Calls) Lucy!—Lucy!—Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter LUCY

LUCY. Did you call, ma'am?

MRS. MALAPROP. Yes, girl.—Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

MRS. MALAPROP. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

LUCY. O Gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out.

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

LUCY. No, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. So! come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius;—but mind, Lucy—if ever you betray what you are entrusted with—(unless it be other people's secrets to me) you forfeit my malevolence forever;—and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality.

[Exit.]

LUCY. Ha! ha! ha!—So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite.—(Altering her manner) Let girls in my station be as fond as they please of appearing expert and knowing in their trusts;—commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately.—(Looks at a paper) For “abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign!—in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve; gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, etc., etc., numberless!—From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half.”—About a quarter's pay!—Item, “from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her”—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—“two guineas, and a black paduasoy.”—Item, “from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters”—which I never delivered—“two guineas and a pair of buckles.”—Item, “from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket-pieces, and a silver snuff-box!”—Well done, simplicity!—Yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe that he was corresponding, not with the Aunt, but with the Niece; for though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [Exit.]

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## ACT II

### SCENE I. CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE'S Lodgings

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE and FAG

FAG. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in. I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

ABSOLUTE. And what did he say on hearing I was at Bath?

FAG. Sir, in my life I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished! He started back two or three paces, rapped out a dozen inter-

<sup>1</sup>A silk, originally made at Padua.

jectoral oaths, and asked what the devil had brought you here!

ABSOLUTE. Well, sir, and what did you say?

FAG. Oh, I lied, sir—I forget the precise lie; but you may depend on't, he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in future, I should be glad to fix what *has* brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently. Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious indeed.

ABSOLUTE. You have said nothing to them—?

FAG. Oh, not a word, sir,—not a word! Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)—

ABSOLUTE. 'Sdeath!—you rascal! you have not trusted him!

FAG. Oh, *no*, sir—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly! “My master” (said I), “honest Thomas” (you know, sir, one says *honest* to one's inferiors), “is come to Bath to *recruit*.”—Yes, sir, I said to *recruit*—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor anyone else.

ABSOLUTE. Well, *recruit* will do—let it be so.

FAG. Oh, sir, *recruit* will do surprisingly—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas that your honor had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen,<sup>1</sup> seven minority waiters,<sup>2</sup> and thirteen billiard-markers.

ABSOLUTE. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

FAG. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon.—But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless one supports it. Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge indorsements as well as the bill.

ABSOLUTE. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security.—Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

FAG. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

ABSOLUTE. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

FAG. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in but his gentleman who was with him at Bristol.—I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down—

ABSOLUTE. Go, tell him I am here.

FAG. Yes, sir.—(*Going*) I beg pardon, sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favor to remember that we are *recruiting*, if you please.

ABSOLUTE. Well, well.

FAG. And, in tenderness to my character, if your honor could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I should esteem it as an obligation; for though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it *hurts* one's conscience to be found out. [*Exit.*]

ABSOLUTE. Now for my whimsical friend—if he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him—

*Enter FAULKLAND*

—Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

FAULKLAND. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

ABSOLUTE. Faith, much as they were. I have not seen her since our quarrel; however, I expect to be recalled every hour.

FAULKLAND. Why don't you persuade her to go off with you at once?

ABSOLUTE. What, and lose two-thirds of her fortune? You forget that, my friend.—No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

FAULKLAND. Nay, then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of *her*, propose to the aunt *in your own character*, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

ABSOLUTE. Softly, softly; for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and a reversion<sup>3</sup> of a good fortune on my side. No, no; I must prepare her gradually for the discovery and make myself necessary to her before I risk it.—Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

FAULKLAND. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

ABSOLUTE. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing,

<sup>1</sup> Bearers of sedan chairs.

<sup>2</sup> Waiters out of place

<sup>3</sup> A right or hope of future possession.



captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man!

FAULKLAND. I own I am unfit for company.

ABSOLUTE. Am *I* not a lover; aye, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry every-  
where with me such a confounded farrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, and all the flimsy furniture of a country miss's brain!

FAULKLAND. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.—You throw for a large stake, but losing—you could stake, and throw again;—but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

ABSOLUTE. But, for Heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present? Has Julia missed writing this last post? or was her last too tender, or too cool; or too grave, or too gay; or—

FAULKLAND. Nay, nay, Jack.

ABSOLUTE. Why, her love—her honor—her prudence, you cannot doubt.

FAULKLAND. O! upon my soul, I never have;—but what grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand! I fear for her spirits—her health—her life.—My absence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me, may oppress her gentle temper. And for her health—does not every hour bring me cause to be alarmed? If it rains, some shower may even then have chilled her delicate frame!—If the wind be keen, some rude blast may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her for whom only I value mine. O Jack! when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

ABSOLUTE. Aye, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or no.—Well then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia was well and in spirits, you would be entirely content.

FAULKLAND. I should be happy beyond measure—I am anxious only for that.

ABSOLUTE. Then to cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

FAULKLAND. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

ABSOLUTE. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

FAULKLAND. Can you be serious?

ABSOLUTE. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously, then, it is as I tell you—upon my honor.

FAULKLAND. My dear friend!—*[Calls]* Hollo, Du-Peigne! my hat!—My dear Jack—*now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.*

*Enter FAG*

FAG. Sir, Mr. Acres just arrived is below.

ABSOLUTE. Stay, Faulkland; this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her.—Fag, show the gentleman up. *[Exit FAG.]*

FAULKLAND. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, very intimate. I insist on your not going; besides, his character will divert you.

FAULKLAND. Well, I should like to ask him a few questions.

ABSOLUTE. He is likewise a rival of mine—that is of my *other self's*, for he does not think his friend Captain Absolute ever saw the lady in question;—and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of *one Beverley*, a concealed skulking rival, who—

FAULKLAND. Hush!—He's here.

*Enter ACRES*

ACRES. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how do'st thou? just arrived, faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack!—Odds whips and wheels! I've traveled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall.

ABSOLUTE. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither.—Give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

ACRES. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you: sir, I solicit your connections.—Hey, Jack—what, this is Mr. Faulkland, who—

ABSOLUTE. Aye, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

ACRES. Odd so! she and your father can be but just arrived before me—I suppose you

have seen them.—Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

FAULKLAND. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir.—I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire?

ACRES. Never knew her better in my life, sir,—never better. Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

FAULKLAND. Indeed!—I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

ACRES. False, false, sir—only said to vex you; quite the reverse, I assure you.

FAULKLAND. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

ABSOLUTE. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick?

FAULKLAND. No, no, you misunderstand me;—yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love.—Now confess— isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

ACRES. Good apartments, Jack.

FAULKLAND. Well, sir, but you were saying that Miss Melville has been so *exceedingly* well—what then, she has been merry and gay I suppose?—Always in spirits—hey?

ACRES. Merry? Odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humor!

FAULKLAND. There, Jack, there.—Oh, by my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome.—What! happy and I away!

ABSOLUTE. Have done. How foolish this is! just now you were only apprehensive for your mistress's *spirits*.

FAULKLAND. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

ABSOLUTE. No, indeed, you have not.

FAULKLAND. Have I been lively and entertaining?

ABSOLUTE. Oh! upon my word, I acquit you.

FAULKLAND. Have I been full of wit and humor?

ABSOLUTE. No, faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid, indeed.

ACRES. What's the matter with the gentleman?

ABSOLUTE. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

FAULKLAND. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, she has a *happy* disposition!

ACRES. That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp, squallante, rumblante, and quiver-  
ante!—There was this time month—Odds minims and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert!

FAULKLAND. There again, what say you to this? you see she has been all mirth and song—not a thought of me!

ABSOLUTE. Pho! man, is not music the food of love?

FAULKLAND. Well, well, it may be so.—Pray, Mr.—, what's his damned name?—Do you remember what songs Miss Melville sung?

ACRES. Not I, indeed.

ABSOLUTE. Stay, now, they were some pretty melancholy, purling-stream airs, I warrant. Perhaps you may recollect;—did she sing, *When absent from my Soul's Delight*?

ACRES. No, that wa'n't it.

ABSOLUTE. Or *Go, gentle Gales*? (*Sings*) "Go, gentle gales!"

ACRES. O no! nothing like it. Odds slips! now I recollect one of them—(*Sings*) "My heart's my own, my will is free."

FAULKLAND. Fool! fool that I am to fix all my happiness upon such a trifler! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you say to this, sir?

ABSOLUTE. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

FAULKLAND. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have had her sad or sick;—yet surely a sympathetic heart would have shown itself even in the choice of a song—she might have been temperately healthy and somehow, plaintively gay.—But she has been dancing too, I doubt not!

ACRES. What does the gentleman say about dancing?

ABSOLUTE. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

ACRES. Aye, truly, does she!—There was at our last race ball—

<sup>1</sup>Half-notes and quarter-notes (music).

FAULKLAND. Hell and the devil!—There!—there—I told you so! Oh! she thrives in my absence!—Dancing! But her whole feelings have been in opposition with mine!—I have been anxious, silent, pensive, sedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulness.—She has been all health! spirit! laugh! song! dance!—Oh! damned, damned levity!

ABSOLUTE. For Heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so!—Suppose she has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

FAULKLAND. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form's sake. —What, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a *minuet*—hey?

ACRES. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of was her *country-dancing*. Odds swimings! she has such an air with her!

FAULKLAND. Now, disappointment on her!—Defend this, Absolute; why don't you defend this?—Country-dances! jigs and reels—am I to blame now? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but *country-dances*!—Zounds! had she made one in a *cotillion*—I believe I could have forgiven even that.—But to be monkey-led for a night!—to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous, palming puppies!—to show paces like a managed filly!—O Jack, there never can be but *one* man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a *country-dance*; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great-uncles and aunts!

ABSOLUTE. Aye, to be sure!—grandfathers and grandmothers!

FAULKLAND. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, 'twill spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the very air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby<sup>1</sup> has perceived it.

ABSOLUTE. Aye, aye, you are in a hurry to throw yourself at Julia's feet.

FAULKLAND. I'm not in a humor to be trifled with—I shall see her only to upbraid her.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

FAULKLAND. Damn his news! [Exit.]

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland five minutes since, "nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness"!

ACRES. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

ABSOLUTE. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

ACRES. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me—that's a good joke.

ABSOLUTE. There's nothing strange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

ACRES. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief—ha! ha! But you know I am not my own property; my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but odds frogs and tambours!<sup>2</sup> I shan't take matters so here, now ancient Madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master. I shall straightway cashier the hunting-frock—and render my leather breeches incapable. My hair has been in training some time.

ABSOLUTE. Indeed!

ACRES. Aye—and thoff the side curls are a little restive, my hind-part takes to it very kindly.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not.

ACRES. Absolutely I propose so—then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

ABSOLUTE. Spoke like a man! But pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

ACRES. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it?—I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia—a great scholar, I assure you—says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, "By Jove!" or "By Bacchus!" or "By Mars!" or "By Venus!" or "By Pallas," according to the sentiment—so that

<sup>1</sup>Lubber.

<sup>2</sup>Braided loops to secure the coat or cloak, and frames used in embroidering (or fabrics so embroidered).



to swear with propriety, says my little Major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense";<sup>1</sup> and this we call the "oath referential," or "sentimental swearing"—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

ABSOLUTE. Very genteel, and very new, indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

ACRES. Aye, aye, the best terms will grow obsolete.—Damns have had their day.

*Enter FAG*

FAG. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you.—Shall I show him into the parlor?

ABSOLUTE. Aye—you may.

ACRES. Well, I must be gone—

ABSOLUTE. Stay; who is it, Fag?

FAG. Your father, sir.

ABSOLUTE. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly? *[Exit FAG.]*

ACRES. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings. I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Adieu, Jack! we must meet at night. Odds bottles and glasses! you shall give me a dozen bumps to little Lydia.

ABSOLUTE. That I will with all my heart. *[Exit ACRES.]*  
Now for a parental lecture! I hope he has heard nothing of the business that brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

*Enter SIR ANTHONY*

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I am delighted to see you here, looking so well! your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

SIR ANTHONY. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

ABSOLUTE. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

ABSOLUTE. Pardon me, sir, I never saw

you look more strong and hearty, and I pray frequently that you may continue so.

SIR ANTHONY. I hope your prayers may be heard, with all my heart. Well, then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time. Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission and what I have hitherto allowed you is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, you are very good.

SIR ANTHONY. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, your kindness overpowers me—such generosity makes the gratitude of reason more lively than the sensations even of filial affection.

SIR ANTHONY. I am glad you are so sensible of my attention—and you shall be master of a large estate in a few weeks.

ABSOLUTE. Let my future life, sir, speak my gratitude; I cannot express the sense I have of your munificence.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

SIR ANTHONY. Oh, that shall be as your wife chooses.

ABSOLUTE. My wife, sir!

SIR ANTHONY. Aye, aye, settle that between you—settle that between you.

ABSOLUTE. A wife, sir, did you say?

SIR ANTHONY. Aye, a wife.—Why, did not I mention her before?

ABSOLUTE. Not a word of it, sir.

SIR ANTHONY. Odd so!—I musn't forget her though.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife; but I suppose that makes no difference.

ABSOLUTE. Sir! sir!—you amaze me!

SIR ANTHONY. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

ABSOLUTE. I was, sir—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

SIR ANTHONY. Why—what difference does that make? Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

ABSOLUTE. If my happiness is to be the price, I must beg leave to decline the purchase.—Pray, sir, who is the lady?

<sup>1</sup>See Pove's *Essay on Criticism*, Part II, l. 165.

SIR ANTHONY. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love and to marry her directly.

ABSOLUTE. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

SIR ANTHONY. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to *object* to a lady you know nothing of.

ABSOLUTE. Then, sir, I must tell you plainly that my inclinations are fixed on another.

SIR ANTHONY. They are, are they? Well that's lucky—because you will have more merit in your obedience to me.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, my heart is engaged to an angel.

SIR ANTHONY. Then pray, let it send an excuse. It is very sorry—but *business* prevents its waiting on her.

ABSOLUTE. But my vows are pledged to her.

SIR ANTHONY. Let her foreclose, Jack—let her foreclose; they are not worth redeeming. Besides, you have the angel's vows in exchange, I suppose; so there can be no loss there.

ABSOLUTE. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you once for all that in this point I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTHONY. Hark'ee, Jack.—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself—when I am not thwarted;—no one more easily led—when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I must repeat—in this I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTHONY. Now damn me! if ever I call you *Jack* again while I live!

ABSOLUTE. Nay, sir, but hear me.

SIR ANTHONY. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word! So give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog!—if you don't, by—

ABSOLUTE. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness? to—

SIR ANTHONY. Zounds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the Bull's in Cox's Museum,<sup>1</sup> she

shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah!—yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

ABSOLUTE. This is reason and moderation, indeed!

SIR ANTHONY. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

ABSOLUTE. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humor for mirth in my life.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Tis false, sir! I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you will grin when I am gone, sirrah!

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

SIR ANTHONY. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please!—It won't do with me, I promise you.

ABSOLUTE. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, sir, upon my word.

SIR ANTHONY. So you will fly out! Can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can *passion* do?—*passion* is of no service, you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate!—There, you sneer again! don't provoke me!—but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the weakness of my disposition!—Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—

But mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do everything on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you.—If not, zounds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest.—I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and damn me, if ever I call you Jack again!

[Exit.

ABSOLUTE, *solus*

ABSOLUTE. Mild, gentle, considerate father—I kiss your hands!—What a tender method of giving his opinion in these matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not trust him with the

<sup>1</sup>James Cox was a jeweler and maker of mechanical toys of great value. Of these he had a remarkable collection which he exhibited in London in 1773 and 1774.

truth.—I wonder what old, wealthy hag it is that he wants to bestow on me!—Yet he married himself for love, and was in his youth a bold intriguer and a gay companion!

*Enter FAG*

FAG. Assuredly, sir, our father is wrath to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the bannisters all the way. I and the cook's dog stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane, bids me carry that to my master, then kicking the poor Turnspit into the area, damns us all, for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

ABSOLUTE. Cease your impertinence, sir, at present.—Did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way!

*[Pushes him aside, and exit.]*

*FAG, solus*

FAG. Soh! Sir Anthony trims my master; he is afraid to reply to his father—then vents his spleen on poor Fag!—When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another who happens to come in the way, is the vilest injustice! Ah! it shows the worst temper—the basest—

*Enter Errand-Boy*

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

FAG. Well, you little dirty puppy, you need not bawl so!—The meanest disposition! the—

Boy. Quick, quick, Mr. Fag!

FAG. *Quick! quick!* you impudent jack-anapes! Am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred—  
*[Exit, kicking and beating him.]*

SCENE II. *The North Parade*

*Enter LUCY*

LUCY. So—I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute. However, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received notice in form. Poor Acres is dismissed!—Well, I have done him a last friendly office, in letting him know that Beverley was here before him.—Sir Lucius is

generally more punctual when he expects to hear from his “dear Dalia,” as he calls her; I wonder he's not here!—I have a little scruple of conscience from this deceit, though I should not be paid so well if my hero knew that Delia was near fifty, and her own mistress.—I could not have thought he would have been so nice, when there's a golden egg in the case, as to care whether he has it from a pullet or an old hen.

*Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER*

SIR LUCIUS. Hah! my little ambassadress!—upon my conscience, I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

LUCY. *(Speaking simply)* O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith!—maybe that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-House, and I chose the window on purpose that I might not miss you.

LUCY. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

SIR LUCIUS. Sure enough it must have been so—and I never dreamed it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

LUCY. Yes, but I have; I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

SIR LUCIUS. Oh, faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed.—Well—let me see what the dear creature says.

LUCY. There, Sir Lucius.

*(Gives him a letter)*

SIR LUCIUS. *(Reads)* “Sir—there is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination; such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger.”—Very pretty, upon my word.—  
45 “As my motive is interested, you may be assured my love shall never be miscellaneous.”  
Very well.

“Female punctuation forbids me to say more; yet let me add that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections. Yours, while meretricious.—Dalia.” Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language.—Faith, she's quite the queen of the



dictionary!—for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call—though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

LUCY. Aye, sir, a lady of her experience—

SIR LUCIUS. Experience! What, at seven-<sup>5</sup>teen?

LUCY. Oh, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off-hand!

SIR LUCIUS. Faith, she must be very deep read to write this way—though she is rather<sup>10</sup> an arbitrary writer too; for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom.—However, when affection guides the pen,<sup>15</sup> Lucy, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

LUCY. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

SIR LUCIUS. Oh, tell her I'll make her the<sup>20</sup> best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain!—But we must get the old gentleman's consent—and do everything fairly.

LUCY. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you<sup>25</sup> wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.

SIR LUCIUS. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it!—I am so poor that I can't afford to do a dirty action.—If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her<sup>30</sup> fortune with a great deal of pleasure.—However, my pretty girl, (*Gives her money*) here's a little something to buy you a riband; and meet me in the evening and I'll give you an answer to this. So, hussy, (*Kisses her*) take<sup>35</sup> a kiss beforehand to put you in mind.

LUCY. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never seed such a gemman! My lady won't like you if you're so impudent.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith, she will, Lucy!—That<sup>40</sup> same—pho! what's the name of it?—modesty—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked; so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her *fifty*—my dear.

LUCY. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

SIR LUCIUS. [*Approaches her*] Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

LUCY. For shame now; here is someone<sup>50</sup> coming.

SIR LUCIUS. Oh, faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[*Sees FAG.—Exit, humming a tune.*]

*Enter FAG*

FAG. So, so, ma'am! I humbly beg pardon.

LUCY. O lud! now, Mr. Fag, you flurry one so.

FAG. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please.—You play false with us, madam.—I saw you give the baronet a letter.—My master shall know this—and if he don't call him out, I will.

LUCY. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty.—That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton.—She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

FAG. What tastes some people have!—Why, I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times.—But what says our young lady? any message to my master?

LUCY. Sad news, Mr. Fag.—A worse rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

FAG. What, Captain Absolute?

LUCY. Even so—I overheard it all.

FAG. Ha! ha! ha! very good, faith! Good-bye, Lucy, I must away with this news.

LUCY. Well—you may laugh—but it is true, I assure you.—(*Going*) But—Mr. Fag—tell your master not to be cast down by this.

FAG. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

LUCY. And charge him not to think of quarreling with young Absolute.

FAG. Never fear!—never fear!

LUCY. Be sure—bid him keep up his spirits.

FAG. We will—we will. [*Exeunt severally.*]

### ACT III

#### SCENE I. *The North Parade*

*Enter ABSOLUTE*

<sup>45</sup> [ABSOLUTE.] 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed.—Whimsical enough, faith! My father wants to *force* me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with!—He must not know of my connection with her yet a while.—He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters, and Lydia shall not yet lose her hopes of an elopement.—However, I'll read my recantation instantly.—My conversion is something sudden, in-

deed, but I can assure him it is very *sincere*. So, so!—here he comes. He looks plaguy gruff.

(*Steps aside*)

Enter SIR ANTHONY

[SIR ANTHONY.] No, I'll die sooner than forgive him—*Die*, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him.—At our last meeting his impudence had almost put me out of temper—an obstinate, passionate, self-willed boy!—Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters!—for putting him at twelve years old into a marching regiment and allowing him fifty pounds a year, beside his pay, ever since!—But I have done with him; he's anybody's son, for me.—I never will see him more, never—never—never—never!

ABSOLUTE. [*Approaching*] Now for a penitential face.

SIR ANTHONY. Fellow, get out of my way!

ABSOLUTE. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

SIR ANTHONY. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

ABSOLUTE. A sincere penitent.—I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error and to submit entirely to your will.

SIR ANTHONY. What's that?

ABSOLUTE. I have been revolving and reflecting and considering on your past goodness and kindness and condescension to me.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, sir?

ABSOLUTE. I have been likewise weighing and balancing what you were pleased to mention concerning duty and obedience and authority.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, puppy?

ABSOLUTE. Why then, sir, the result of my reflections is—a resolution to sacrifice every inclination of my own to your satisfaction.

SIR ANTHONY. Why, now you talk sense—absolute sense. I never heard anything more sensible in my life.—Confound you; you shall be *Jack* again!

ABSOLUTE. I am happy in the appellation.

SIR ANTHONY. Why, then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you—who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented my telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and

rapture—prepare!—What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

ABSOLUTE. Languish! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire?

5 SIR ANTHONY. Worcestershire? No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

10 ABSOLUTE. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, stay—I think I do recollect something.—*Languish! Languish!* She squints, don't she?—a little, red-haired girl?

15 SIR ANTHONY. Squints?—A red-haired girl!—Zounds! no.

20 ABSOLUTE. Then I must have forgot; it can't be the same person.

SIR ANTHONY. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

ABSOLUTE. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent.—If I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

SIR ANTHONY. Nay, but Jack, such eyes—25 such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks—her cheeks, Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale30 eyes! Then, Jack, her lips!—O Jack, lips smiling at their own discretion; and if not smiling, more sweetly pouting, more lovely in sullenness.

ABSOLUTE. That's she, indeed.—Well done,35 old gentleman.

SIR ANTHONY. Then, Jack, her neck!—O Jack! Jack!

ABSOLUTE. And which is to be mine, sir—the niece or the aunt?

40 SIR ANTHONY. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you! When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! The *aunt*, indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched anything old or ugly to gain an empire.

ABSOLUTE. Not to please your father, sir?

SIR ANTHONY. To please my father! zounds! not to please—Oh, my father—odd50 so!—yes—yes; if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter. Though he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

ABSOLUTE. I dare say not, sir.

SIR ANTHONY. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I repeat it; if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect, you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and though *one* eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favor of *two*, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

SIR ANTHONY. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you're an anchorite!—a vile, insensible stock. You a soldier?—you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on!—Odds life! I have a great mind to marry the girl myself!

ABSOLUTE. I am entirely at your disposal, sir. If you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the *aunt*; or, if you should change your mind, and take the old lady—'tis the same to me—I'll marry the *niece*.

SIR ANTHONY. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or—but come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must!—Come, now—damn your demure face!—come, confess, Jack—you have been lying, ha'n't you! You have been lying, hey?—I'll never forgive you if you ha'n't.—So now; own, my dear Jack, you have been playing the hypocrite—hey? I'll never forgive you if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

ABSOLUTE. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

SIR ANTHONY. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me; I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly.

ABSOLUTE. Where does she lodge, sir?

SIR ANTHONY. What a dull question! Only on the Grove<sup>1</sup> here.

ABSOLUTE. Oh! then I can call on her in my way to the coffee-house.

SIR ANTHONY. In your way to the coffee-

house! You'll set your heart down in your way to the coffee-house, hey? Ah! you leaden-nerved, wooden-hearted dolt! But come along, you shall see her directly; her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along! I'll never forgive you if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myself!

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II. JULIA'S Dressing-Room

FAULKLAND, *solus*

FAULKLAND. They told me Julia would return directly; I wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point; but on this one subject, and to this one object, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungenerously fretful and madly capricious! I am conscious of it—yet I cannot correct myself! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expression!—I was ashamed to appear less happy—though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations; yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so *very* happy in my absence. She is coming! Yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

*Enter JULIA*

JULIA. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

FAULKLAND. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome—restrained as we were by the presence of a third person?

JULIA. O Faulkland, when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I discovered more coolness in your first salutation than my long-hoarded joy could have presaged.

FAULKLAND. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health. Sure I had no cause for coldness?

JULIA. Nay then, I see you have taken something ill. You must not conceal from me what it is.

<sup>1</sup>The Orange Grove (named for the Prince of Orange), a fashionable resort near the north Parade.



FAULKLAND. Well, then—shall I own to you—but you will despise me, Julia—nay, I despise myself for it.—Yet I *will* own that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbor Acres, was somewhat 5 damped by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire—on your mirth—your singing—dancing, and I know not what! For such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful 10 moment in your absence as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear that steals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

JULIA. Must I never cease to tax my 15 Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice? Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

FAULKLAND. They have no weight with me, Julia—No, no! I am happy if you have 20 been so—yet only say that you did not sing with *mirth*—say that you *thought* of Faulkland in the dance.

JULIA. I never can be happy in your absence.—If I wear a countenance of con- 25 tent, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. If I seemed sad, it were to make malice triumph and say that I fixed my heart on one who left me to lament his roving and my own credulity. 30 —Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you when I say that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

FAULKLAND. You were ever all goodness to me. Oh, I am a brute when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

JULIA. If ever, without such cause from you as I will not suppose possible, you find 40 my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude.

FAULKLAND. Ah! Julia, that *last* word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your 45 *gratitude*! Search your heart, Julia; perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but the warm effusion of a too thankful heart.

JULIA. For what quality must I love you? 50

FAULKLAND. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to *esteem* me. And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be

convinced that I owed no obligation *there* for any part of your affection.

JULIA. Where Nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it, as misplaced. I have seen men who in *this* vain article perhaps might rank above you, but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

FAULKLAND. Now this is not well from 10 *you*, Julia—I despise person in a man; yet if you loved me as I wish, though I were an Ethiop, you'd think none so fair.

JULIA. I see you are determined to be unkind! The *contract* which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's 15 privilege.

FAULKLAND. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. I would not have been more free—no, I am proud 20 of my restraint. Yet—yet—perhaps your high respect alone for this solemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which else had made a worthier choice. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought and 25 promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

JULIA. Then, try me now. Let us be free as strangers as to what is past; my heart will not feel more liberty!

FAULKLAND. There now! So hasty, Julia? so anxious to be free? If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not lose 30 your hold, even though I wished it!

JULIA. Oh, you torture me to the heart! 35 I cannot bear it.

FAULKLAND. I do not mean to distress you. If I loved you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment.—But hear me! All my fretful doubts arise from this—Women are 40 not used to weigh and separate the motives of their affections. The cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty may sometimes be mistaken for the pleadings of the heart. I would not boast—yet let me say that I 45 have neither age, person, or character, to found dislike on; my fortune, such as few ladies could be charged with *indiscretion* in the match. O Julia! when *Love* receives such countenance from *Prudence*, nice<sup>1</sup> minds will 50 be suspicious of its *birth*.

JULIA. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; but as they seem pressing to

<sup>1</sup>Discriminating.

insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so.—I have given you no cause for this!

[*Exit in tears.*]

FAULKLAND. In tears! Stay, Julia—stay but for a moment!—The door is fastened!— Julia!—my soul—but for one moment!— I hear her sobbing!—’Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus! Yet stay! Aye—she is coming now;—how little resolution there is in women!—how a few soft words can turn them!—No, faith,—she is *not* coming either!—Why, Julia—my love—say but that you forgive me—come but to tell me that.— Now this is being *too* resentful. Stay! she *is* coming too—I thought she would—no *steadiness* in anything! her going away must have been a mere trick then—she sha’n’t see that I was hurt by it.—I’ll affect indifference —(*Hums a tune; then listens*) No, zounds! she’s *not* coming!—nor don’t intend it, I suppose.—This is *not steadiness*, but *obstinacy*!—Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence to quarrel with her tenderness?—’twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I’ll wait till her just resentment is abated—and when I distress her so again, may I lose her forever! and be linked instead to some antique virago, whose gnawing passions and long-hoarded spleen shall make me curse my folly half the day and all the night.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III. MRS. MALAPROP’S Lodgings

MRS. MALAPROP and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE

MRS. MALAPROP. Your being Sir Anthony’s son, captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation, but from the ingenuity of your appearance I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

ABSOLUTE. Permit me to say, madam, that as I never yet have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair at present is the honor of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir, you do me infinite honor! I beg, captain, you’ll be seated.— [*He sits*] Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman!—few think how a little knowl-

edge becomes a gentlewoman. Men have no sense now but for the worthless flower—beauty!

ABSOLUTE. It is but too true, indeed, ma’am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame—they think our admiration of *beauty* so great, that *knowledge* in them would be superfluous. Thus, like garden-trees, they seldom show fruits till time has robbed them of more specious blossom.—Few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once!

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir, you overpower me with good-breeding.—He is the very pineapple of politeness!—You are not ignorant, captain, that this giddy girl has somehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eavesdropping ensign, whom none of us have seen and nobody knows anything of?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before.—I’m not at all prejudiced against her on *that* account.

MRS. MALAPROP. You are very good and very considerate, captain. I am sure I have done everything in my power since I exploded the affair; long ago I laid my positive conjunction on her, never to think on the fellow again.—I have since laid Sir Anthony’s preposition before her; but, I am sorry to say, she seems resolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her.

ABSOLUTE. It must be very distressing, indeed, ma’am.

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him, but behold! this very day I have interceded another letter from the fellow! I believe I have it in my pocket.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Oh, the devil! my last note.

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, here it is.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Aye, my note indeed!—Oh, the little traitress, Lucy!

MRS. MALAPROP. There, perhaps you may know the writing. (*Gives him the letter*)

ABSOLUTE. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I *certainly must* have seen this hand before—

MRS. MALAPROP. Nay, but read it, captain.

ABSOLUTE. (*Reads*) “My soul’s idol, my adored Lydia!”—Very tender, indeed!

MRS. MALAPROP. Tender! aye, and profane too, o' my conscience.

ABSOLUTE. (*Reads*) "I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival"—

MRS. MALAPROP. That's *you*, sir.

ABSOLUTE. "Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honor."—Well, that's handsome enough.

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

ABSOLUTE. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

ABSOLUTE. "As for the old weather-beaten she-dragon who guards you"—Who can he mean by that?

MRS. MALAPROP. *Me*, sir!—*me!*—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

ABSOLUTE. Impudent scoundrel!—"it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance, as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity which makes her dress up her coarse features and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand"—

MRS. MALAPROP. There, sir! an attack upon my language! What do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! Was ever such a brute! save if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue and a nice derangement of epitaphs!

ABSOLUTE. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—"same ridiculous vanity"—

MRS. MALAPROP. You need not read it again, sir.

ABSOLUTE. I beg pardon, ma'am—"does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration"—an impudent coxcomb!—"so that I have a scheme to see you shortly with the old harri-  
dan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews."—Was ever such assurance!

MRS. MALAPROP. Did you ever hear anything like it?—he'll elude my vigilance, will he?—Yes, yes! ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these floors;—we'll try who can plot best!

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy;

ha! ha! ha!—Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him; then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick<sup>1</sup> will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

MRS. MALAPROP. I am delighted with the scheme; never was anything better perpetrated!

ABSOLUTE. But, pray, could not I see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, I don't know—I doubt she is not prepared for a first visit of this kind. There is a decorum in these matters.

ABSOLUTE. O Lord! she won't mind *me*—only tell her Beverley—

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir!

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Gently, good tongue.

MRS. MALAPROP. What did you say of Beverley?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below! she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

MRS. MALAPROP. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves; besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha! Let him if he can, I say again: (*Calling*) Lydia, come down here!—He'll make me a "go-between in their interviews"!—ha! ha! ha!—Come down, I say, Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing, ha! ha! ha!—his impudence is truly ridiculous.

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am, ha! ha! ha!

MRS. MALAPROP. The little hussy won't hear. Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her. And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

ABSOLUTE. As you please, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. For the present, captain, your servant. Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I see—"elude my vigilance"; yes, yes; ha! ha! ha!

[*Exit.*]

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha! one would think now that I might throw off all disguise at once and seize my prize with security; but

<sup>1</sup>Nick of time.



such is Lydia's caprice that to undeceive were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me.

(*Walks aside, and seems engaged in looking at the pictures*) 5

Enter LYDIA

LYDIA. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart. I have heard of girls, persecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favored lover to the generosity of his rival; suppose I were to try it.—There stands the hated rival—an officer too!—but oh, how unlike my Beverley! I wonder he don't begin—truly he seems a very negligent wooer!—Quite at his ease, upon my word!—I'll speak first.—Mr. Absolute.

ABSOLUTE. (*Turns round*) Madam.

LYDIA. O heav'ns!—Beverley!

ABSOLUTE. Hush!—hush, my life! softly! be not surprised!

LYDIA. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed!—for heav'n's sake! how came you here?

ABSOLUTE. Briefly, I have deceived your aunt—I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and contriving to have him kept away have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

LYDIA. Oh, charming! And she really takes you for young Absolute?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, she's convinced of it.

LYDIA. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her sagacity is overreached!

ABSOLUTE. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur; then let me conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution and with a licensed warmth plead for my reward.

LYDIA. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth—that burden on the wings of love?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, come to me, rich only thus—in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love—'twill be generous in you, Lydia,—for well you know it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

LYDIA. [*Aside*] How persuasive are his words!—how charming will poverty be with him!

ABSOLUTE. Ah! my soul, what a life will we then live! Love shall be our idol and support! we will worship him with a monastic strictness, abjuring all worldly toys, to center every thought and action there.—Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth, while the surrounding gloom of adversity shall make the flame of our pure love show doubly bright. By heav'ns! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom and say, The world affords no smile to me—but here—(*Embracing her*).—(*Aside*) If she holds out now, the devil is in it!

LYDIA. (*Aside*) Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes! but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis.

20 Re-enter MRS. MALAPROP, listening

MRS. MALAPROP. (*Aside*) I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself.

ABSOLUTE. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] Warmth abated!—so!—she has been in a passion, I suppose.

LYDIA. No—nor ever can while I have life.

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] An ill-tempered little devil! She'll be in a passion all her life—will she?

LYDIA. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] Very dutiful, upon my word!

LYDIA. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

MRS. MALAPROP. [*Aside*] I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face—this to his face!

ABSOLUTE. (*Kneeling*) Thus then let me enforce my suit.

MRS. MALAPROP. (*Aside*) Aye, poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity! I can contain no longer.—Why, hussy! hussy!—I have overheard you.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Oh, confound her vigilance!

MRS. MALAPROP. Captain Absolute,—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) So! all's safe, I find.  
—I have hopes, madam, that time will bring  
the young lady—

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, there's nothing to  
be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as  
an allegory on the banks of Nile.

LYDIA. Nay, madam, what do you charge  
me with now?

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, thou unblushing  
rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his  
face that you loved another better?—didn't  
you say you never would be his?

LYDIA. No, madam—I did not.

MRS. MALAPROP. Good heav'ns! what as-  
surance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know  
that lying don't become a young woman!—  
Didn't you boast that Beverley, that stroller  
Beverley, possessed your heart?—Tell me  
that, I say.

LYDIA. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but  
Beverley—

MRS. MALAPROP. Hold, hold, Assurance!  
—you shall not be so rude.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop,  
don't stop the young lady's speech; she's  
very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt  
me in the least, I assure you.

MRS. MALAPROP. You are *too* good, cap-  
tain—*too* amiably patient—but come with  
me, miss.—Let us see you again soon, cap-  
tain—remember what we have fixed.

ABSOLUTE. I shall, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. Come, take a graceful  
leave of the gentleman.

LYDIA. May every blessing wait on my  
Beverley, my loved Bev—

MRS. MALAPROP. Hussy! I'll choke the  
word in your throat!—come along—come  
along.

[*Exeunt severally, CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE kiss-  
ing his hand to LYDIA, MRS. MALAPROP  
stopping her from speaking.*]

#### SCENE IV. ACRES' Lodgings

ACRES and DAVID, ACRES  
as just dressed

ACRES. Indeed, David—do you think I  
become it so?

DAVID. You are quite another creature,  
believe me, master, by the mass! an'<sup>1</sup> we've  
any luck, we shall see the Devon monkey-  
rony<sup>2</sup> in all the print-shops in Bath!

ACRES. Dress *does* make a difference,  
David.

DAVID. 'Tis all in all, I think.—Differ-  
ence! why, an' you were to go now to Clod  
Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know  
you. Master Butler wouldn't believe his own  
eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard pre-  
serve me!" our dairy-maid would come gig-  
gling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester,  
your honor's favorite, would blush like my  
waistcoat.—Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there  
an't a dog in the house but would bark, and  
I question whether Phillis would wag a hair  
of her tail!

ACRES. Aye, David, there's nothing like  
*polishing*.

DAVID. So I says of your honor's boots;  
but the boy never heeds me!

ACRES. But, David, has Mr. De-la-Grace  
been here? I must rub up my balancing and  
chasing and boring.<sup>3</sup>

DAVID. I'll call again, sir.

ACRES. Do—and see if there are any let-  
ters for me at the post-office.

DAVID. I will.—By the mass, I can't help  
looking at your head!—if I hadn't been by  
at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should  
have known the dish again myself. [*Exit.*]

ACRES. (*Comes forward, practicing a danc-  
ing-step*) Sink, slide—coupee.<sup>4</sup>—Confound  
the first inventors of cotillions! say I—they  
are as bad as algebra to us country gentle-  
men.—I can walk a minuet easy enough when  
I am forced!—and I have been accounted a  
good stick in a country-dance.—Odds jigs  
and tabors! I never valued your cross-over  
two couple—figure in—right and left—and  
I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the county!  
—but these outlandish heathen allemandes<sup>5</sup>  
and cotillions are quite beyond me!—I shall  
never prosper at 'em, that's sure; mine are  
true-born English legs—they don't under-  
stand their curst French lingo!—their *pas*<sup>6</sup>  
this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other!—damn  
me! my feet don't like to be called paws! no,  
'tis certain I have most antigallican toes!

*Enter Servant*

SERVANT. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to  
wait on you, sir.

ACRES. Show him in.

<sup>3</sup>Terms of dancing.

<sup>4</sup>Name for a dance-step.

<sup>5</sup>German dances.

<sup>6</sup>Step.

<sup>1</sup>If. <sup>2</sup>Macaroni, *i.e.*, dandy.

*Enter* SIR LUCIUS

SIR LUCIUS. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

ACRES. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

ACRES. Faith! I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last.—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius.—I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-used gentleman.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, what is the case?—I ask no names.

ACRES. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I falls as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival, and receive answer that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

SIR LUCIUS. Very ill, upon my conscience.—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

ACRES. Why, there's the matter; she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies! he must be at the bottom of it.

SIR LUCIUS. A rival in the case, is there?—and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

ACRES. *Unfairly?*—to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

SIR LUCIUS. Then, sure you know what is to be done!

ACRES. Not I, upon my soul!

SIR LUCIUS. We wear no swords here, but you understand me.

ACRES. What! fight him?

SIR LUCIUS. Aye, to be sure; what can I mean else?

ACRES. But he has given me no provocation.

SIR LUCIUS. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world.—Can a man commit a more heinous offense against another than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul! it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

ACRES. Breach of *friendship*! aye, aye; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in my life.

SIR LUCIUS. That's no argument at all—

he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

ACRES. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valor in him and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my side?

SIR LUCIUS. What the devil signifies *right*, when your *honor* is concerned? Do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad-swords and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

ACRES. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valor rising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say.—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

SIR LUCIUS. Ah, my little friend, if I had Blunderbuss Hall here, I could show you a range of ancestry in the old O'Trigger line that would furnish the New Room!—every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank God our honor and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

ACRES. O Sir Lucius! I have had ancestors too!—every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia!—Odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it—my nerves are become catgut! my sinews wire! and my heart pinchbeck! The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast.—Zounds! as the man in the play says, "I could do such deeds!"

SIR LUCIUS. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

ACRES. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage.—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me. Come, here's pen and paper.—(*Sits down to write*) I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good *bold hand*, however.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray compose yourself.

<sup>1</sup>The new assembly room, or ball room, which had been opened in 1771.

<sup>2</sup>An alloy of copper and zinc, named for its inventor, Pinchbeck, a London jeweler of the eighteenth century.



ACRES. Come—now shall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a “damme.”

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! pho! do the thing *decently*, and like a Christian. Begin now—  
“Sir”!

ACRES. That’s too civil by half.

SIR LUCIUS. “To prevent the confusion that might arise.”

ACRES. Well—

SIR LUCIUS. “From our both addressing the same lady,”

ACRES. Aye, there’s the reason—“same lady”—Well?

SIR LUCIUS. “I shall expect the honor of your company.”

ACRES. Zounds! I’m not asking him to dinner.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, be easy.

ACRES. Well then, “honor of your company.”

SIR LUCIUS. “To settle our pretensions.”

ACRES. Well.

SIR LUCIUS. Let me see—aye, King’s-Mead-Fields will do—“in King’s-Mead-Fields.”

ACRES. So; that’s done. Well, I’ll fold it up presently; my own crest—a hand and dagger—shall be the seal.

SIR LUCIUS. You see now this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

ACRES. Aye, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

SIR LUCIUS. Now, I’ll leave you to fix your own time.—Take my advice, and you’ll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worst come of it, ’twill be off your mind to-morrow.

ACRES. Very true.

SIR LUCIUS. So I shall see nothing of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening.—I would do myself the honor to carry your message; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

ACRES. By my valor, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life! I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson.

SIR LUCIUS. I shall be very proud of instructing you.—Well for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do everything in a mild and agreeable manner.—Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. ACRES’ Lodgings

#### ACRES and DAVID

DAVID. Then, by the mass, sir! I would do no such thing—ne’er a St. Lucius O’Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight when I wa’n’t so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o’t?

ACRES. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius!—Odds sparks and flames! he would have roused your valor.

DAVID. Not he, indeed. I hates such bloodthirsty cormorants. Look’ee, master; if you’d wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-staff, or short-staff, I should never be the man to bid you cry off; but for your curst sharps and snaps! I never knew any good come of ’em.

ACRES. But my *honor*, David—my *honor*! I must be very careful of my honor.

DAVID. Aye, by the mass! and I would be very careful of it; and I think in return my *honor* couldn’t do less than to be very careful of *me*.

ACRES. Odds blades, David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honor!

DAVID. I say then, it would be but civil in *honor* never to risk the loss of the *gentleman*.—Look’ee, master, this *Honor* seems to me to be a marvelous false friend—aye, truly, a very courtier-like servant. Put the case, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can say of me); well, my honor makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance.—So we fight. (Pleasant enough that!) Boh!—I kill him—(the more’s my luck!) Now, pray who gets the profit of it?—why, my *honor*. But put the case that he kills me!—by the mass! I go to the worms and my honor whips over to my enemy.

ACRES. No, David—in that case, odds crowns and laurels! your honor follows you to the grave.

<sup>1</sup>Rapiers with sharpened points and pistols.

DAVID. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

ACRES. Zounds! David, you are a coward!—It doesn't become my valor to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors? 5 —Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

DAVID. Under favor, the surest way of not disgracing them is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee, now, master; to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks, but they are the last people I should choose to have a 15 visiting acquaintance with.

ACRES. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very, *very* great danger, hey?—Odds life, people often fight without any mischief done!

DAVID. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you!—Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his damned double-barreled swords, and cut-and-thrust pistols! Lord, bless us! it makes me tremble 25 to think o't—Those be such desperate, bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide 'em!—from a child I never could fancy 'em!—I suppose there an't so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol! 30

ACRES. Zounds! I *won't* be afraid! Odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid.—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend Jack Absolute to carry it for me.

DAVID. Aye, i' the name of mischief, let 35 *him* be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter! It is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter! and I warrant smells of gunpowder like a soldier's pouch!—Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

ACRES. Out, you poltroon! you ha'n't the valor of a grasshopper.

DAVID. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod Hall!—but I ha' done. How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—Aye, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after! 50 And I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honor, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born.

(*Whimpering*)

ACRES. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight—so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

*Enter Servant*

SERVANT. Captain Absolute, sir.

ACRES. Oh! show him up. [*Exit Servant.*]

DAVID. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

ACRES. What's that!—Don't provoke me, David!

DAVID. Good-bye, master.

(*Whimpering*)

ACRES. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven! [*Exit DAVID.*]

*Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE*

ABSOLUTE. What's the matter, Bob?

20 ACRES. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead! If I hadn't the valor of St. George and the dragon to boot—

ABSOLUTE. But what did you want with me, Bob?

ACRES. Oh!—there—

(*Gives him the challenge*)

ABSOLUTE. "To Ensign Beverley."—(*Aside*) So—what's going on now?—(*Aloud*) Well, what's this?

30 ACRES. A challenge!

ABSOLUTE. Indeed! Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

ACRES. Egad, but I will, Jack. Sir Lucius has wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage—and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

ABSOLUTE. But what have I to do with this?

ACRES. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me and give him this mortal *defiance*.

ABSOLUTE. Well, give it to me, and trust me he gets it.

ACRES. Thank you, my dear friend, my 45 dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

ABSOLUTE. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

ACRES. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend! You couldn't be my second, could you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. Why no, Bob—not in *this* affair—it would not be quite so proper.

ACRES. Well, then, I must fix on my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

*Enter Servant*

SERVANT. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

ABSOLUTE. I'll come instantly.—*(Going)* 10 Well, my little hero, success attend you.

ACRES. Stay—stay, Jack.—If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

ACRES. Aye, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, 20 Jack?

ABSOLUTE. I will, I will; I'll say you are called in the country "Fighting Bob."

ACRES. Right—right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life if 25 I clear my honor.

ABSOLUTE. No!—that's very kind of you.

ACRES. Why, you don't wish me to kill him—do you, Jack?

ABSOLUTE. No, upon my soul, I do not. 30 *(Going)* But "a devil of a fellow," hey?

ACRES. True, true;—but stay—stay Jack! You may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage!

ABSOLUTE. I will, I will.

ACRES. Remember, Jack—a determined dog!

ABSOLUTE. Aye, aye—"Fighting Bob!" 35 *[Exeunt severally.]*

SCENE II. MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings

MRS. MALAPROP and LYDIA

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to him! 45 Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that. A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

LYDIA. *(Aside)* She little thinks whom she is praising!—*(Aloud)* So is Beverley, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

LYDIA. *(Aside)*. Aye, the Captain Absolute you have seen.

MRS. MALAPROP. Then he's so well bred—so full of alacrity and adulation!—and 5 has so much to say for himself—in such good language, too! His physiognomy so grammatical! Then, his presence is so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—"Hesperian curls—the front of *Job* himself!—An eye, like March, to threaten at command!—A station, like Harry Mercury, new—" Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.<sup>1</sup>

15 LYDIA. *(Aside)* How enraged she'll be presently when she discovers her mistake!

*Enter Servant*

SERVANT. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

MRS. MALAPROP. Show them up here.—*[Exit Servant.]*

Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

LYDIA. Madam, I have told you my resolution; I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to or look at him.

*(Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door)*

*Enter SIR ANTHONY and ABSOLUTE*

SIR ANTHONY. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop—come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow.—I don't know 40 what's the matter, but if I hadn't held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

MRS. MALAPROP. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause! *(Aside to her)* Lydia, Lydia! rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects!

SIR ANTHONY. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman and the regard due to her aunt's choice and my alliance.—*(Aside to him)* Now, 50 Jack, speak to her!

ABSOLUTE. *(Aside)* What the devil shall I do! *[Apart]* You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here. I knew she

<sup>1</sup>*Hamlet*, III, iv, 56–59.



wouldn't! I told you so. Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

(ABSOLUTE *seems to expostulate with his father*)

LYDIA. (*Aside*) I wonder I ha'n't heard my aunt exclaim yet! sure, she can't have looked at him!—Perhaps their regimentals are alike and she is something blind.

SIR ANTHONY. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet!

MRS. MALAPROP. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small.—(*Aside to her*) Turn round, Lydia; I blush for you!

SIR ANTHONY. May I not flatter myself that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son?—(*Aside to him*) Why don't you begin, Jack?—Speak, you puppy—speak!

MRS. MALAPROP. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not say she has.—(*Aside to her*) Answer, hussy! why don't you answer?

SIR ANTHONY. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness.—(*Aside to him*) Zounds! sirrah! why don't you speak?

LYDIA. (*Aside*) I think my lover seems as little inclined to conversation as myself.—How strangely blind my aunt must be!

ABSOLUTE. Hem! hem! madam—hem!—(*ABSOLUTE attempts to speak, then returns to SIR ANTHONY*) Faith! sir, I am so confounded!—and—so—so—confused!—I told you I should be so, sir—I knew it.—The—the tremor of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

SIR ANTHONY. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it?—Go up, and speak to her directly!

(ABSOLUTE *makes signs to MRS. MALAPROP to leave them together*)

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir Anthony, shall we leave them together?—(*Aside to her*) Ah! you stubborn little vixen!

SIR ANTHONY. Not yet, ma'am, not yet!—(*Aside to him*) What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or—

(ABSOLUTE *draws near LYDIA*)

ABSOLUTE. [*Aside*] Now Heav'n send she may be too sullen to look round!—I must disguise my voice.—(*Speaks in a low, hoarse tone*) Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not—

SIR ANTHONY. [*Apart*] What the devil ails the fellow? why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

ABSOLUTE. The—the—excess of my awe, and my—my—modesty quite choke me!

SIR ANTHONY. Ah! your *modesty* again!—I'll tell you what, Jack, if you don't speak out directly, and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage!—Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favor us with something more than a side-front.

(MRS. MALAPROP *seems to chide LYDIA*)

ABSOLUTE. So!—all will out, I see!—(*Goes up to LYDIA, speaks softly*) Be not surprised, my Lydia; suppress all surprise at present.

LYDIA. (*Aside*) Heav'n's! 'tis Beverley's voice! Sure he can't have imposed on Sir Anthony too!—(*Looks round by degrees, then starts up*) Is this possible!—my Beverley!—how can this be?—my Beverley?

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Ah! 'tis all over.

SIR ANTHONY. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley!—What can the girl mean?—This is my son, Jack Absolute.

MRS. MALAPROP. For shame, hussy! for shame! your head runs so on that fellow that you have him always in your eyes! Beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

LYDIA. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

SIR ANTHONY. Zounds! the girl's mad!—her brain's turned by reading.

MRS. MALAPROP. O' my conscience, I believe so!—What do you mean by Beverley, hussy? You saw Captain Absolute before to-day; there he is—your husband that shall be.

LYDIA. With all my soul, ma'am—when I refuse my Beverley—

SIR ANTHONY. Oh! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick?—Come here, sirrah; who the devil are you?

ABSOLUTE. Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavor to recollect.

SIR ANTHONY. Are you my son or not?—answer for your mother, your dog, if you won't for me.

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, sir, who are you?—O mercy! I begin to suspect!—

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) Ye Powers of impudence, befriend me!—Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sin-

cerely believe myself to be *yours* also, I hope my duty has always shown.—Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer and shall be proud to add *affectionate nephew*.—I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley who, knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name and a station which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

LYDIA. (*Sullenly*) So—there will be no elopement after all!

SIR ANTHONY. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

ABSOLUTE. Oh, you flatter me, sir—you compliment—'tis my *modesty*, you know, sir—my *modesty* that has stood in my way.

SIR ANTHONY. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however!—I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog—I am. So this was your *penitence*, your *duty* and *obedience*!—I thought it was damned sudden!—"You never heard their names before," not you!—"What Languishes of Worcestershire," hey?—"if you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired!"—Ah! you dissembling villain!—What! (*Pointing to* LYDIA) "She squints, don't she?—a little red-haired girl!"—hey?—Why, you hypocritical young rascal!—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis with difficulty, sir.—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

MRS. MALAPROP. O lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me!—hey!—how! what! Captain, did *you* write the letters then?—What—I am to thank *you* for the elegant compilation of "an old weather-beaten she-dragon"—hey?—O mercy!—was it *you* that reflected on my parts of speech?

ABSOLUTE. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last if you don't assist me.—I shall certainly not be able to stand it!

SIR ANTHONY. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive;—odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden that I could find in my heart to be so good-humored! and so gallant!—hey, Mrs. Malaprop?

MRS. MALAPROP. Well, Sir Anthony,

since *you* desire it, we will not anticipate the past;—so mind, young people—our retrospection will be all to the future.

SIR ANTHONY. Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant!—Jack, isn't the *cheek* as I said, hey?—and the eye, you dog?—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—<sup>10</sup>—theirs is the time of life for happiness!—(*Sings*) "Youth's the season made for joy"<sup>11</sup>—hey!—Odds life! I'm in such spir-its,—I don't know what I couldn't do!—Permit me, ma'am—(*Gives his hand to* MRS. MALAPROP. *Sings*) Tol-de-rol—'gad, I should like to have a little fooling myself—Tol-de-rol! de-rol.

[*Exit singing, and handing* MRS. MALAPROP.

LYDIA sits sullenly in her chair

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) So much thought bodes me no good.—So grave, Lydia?

LYDIA. Sir!

ABSOLUTE. (*Aside*) So!—egad! I thought as much!—that damned monosyllable has froze me!—What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our *friends' consent*, as in our *mutual vows*—

LYDIA. (*Peevishly*) *Friends' consent*, indeed!

ABSOLUTE. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance—a little *wealth* and *comfort* may be endured, after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as—

LYDIA. *Lawyers!* I hate lawyers!

ABSOLUTE. Nay then, we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the license, and—

LYDIA. *The license!*—I hate license!

ABSOLUTE. O my love! be not so unkind!—(*Kneeling*) Thus let me entreat—

LYDIA. Pshaw!—what signifies kneeling when you know I *must* have you?

ABSOLUTE. (*Rising*) Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you.—If I have lost your heart—I resign the rest.—(*Aside*) 'Gad, I must try what a little *spirit* will do.

LYDIA. (*Rising*) Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired

<sup>11</sup>The first line of a song in *The Beggar's Opera* (Act II), by John Gay.

by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating *me* like a *child*!—humoring my romance! and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

ABSOLUTE. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

LYDIA. So, while *I* fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them *all*—(*Walking about in heat*) behold! my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and *I* am *myself* the only dupe at last!—

ABSOLUTE. Nay, but hear me—

LYDIA. No, sir, you could not think that such paltry artifices could please me when the mask was thrown off! But I suppose since your tricks have made you secure of my *fortune*, you are little solicitous about my *affections*.—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! (*Taking a miniature from her bosom*) which I have worn night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, sir; (*Flings it to him*) and be assured I throw the original from my heart as easily!

ABSOLUTE. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that.—Here (*Taking out a picture*), here is Miss Lydia Languish.—What a difference!—aye, *there* is the heav'nly, assenting smile that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar! and *there* the half resentful blush, that *would* have checked the ardor of my thanks!—Well, all that's past—all over indeed!—There, madam—in *beauty*, that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that I cannot find in my heart to *part with it*. (*Puts it up again*)

LYDIA. (*Softening*) 'Tis *your own* doing, sir—I, I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, most certainly—sure, now this is much better than being in love!—ha! ha! ha!—there's some spirit in *this*!—What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises—half an hundred vows, under one's hand, with the marks of a dozen or two angels to witness—all that's of no consequence, you know. To be sure, people will say, "That miss don't know her own mind"—but never mind that.—Or, perhaps, they may be ill-

natured enough to hint that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

LYDIA. There is no bearing his insolence. (*Bursts into tears*)

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY

MRS. MALAPROP. (*Entering*) Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing a while.

LYDIA. (*Sobbing*) *This* is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate!

SIR ANTHONY. What the devil's the matter now?—Zounds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the *oddest billing* and *cooing* I ever heard!—but what the deuce is the meaning of it?—I am quite astonished!

ABSOLUTE. Ask the lady, sir.

MRS. MALAPROP. O mercy!—I'm quite analyzed for my part!—Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

LYDIA. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

SIR ANTHONY. Zounds! I shall be in a frenzy!—Why, Jack, you scoundrel, you are not come out to be anyone else, are you?

MRS. MALAPROP. Aye, sir—there's no more *trick*, is there?—you are not like Cerberus—*three* gentlemen at once, are you?

ABSOLUTE. You'll not let me speak.—I say the *lady* can account for *this* much better than I can.

LYDIA. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again. *There* is the man—I now obey you; for from this moment I renounce him for ever. [*Exit.*]

MRS. MALAPROP. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is—Why sure, captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

SIR ANTHONY. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it. Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, sir, upon my word—

SIR ANTHONY. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 'twas so.

MRS. MALAPROP. O lud! Sir Anthony!—O fie, captain!

ABSOLUTE. Upon my soul, ma'am—

SIR ANTHONY. Come, no excuse, Jack; why, your father, you rogue, was so before you!—the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.—Ha! ha! ha! poor little Lydia! why, you've frightened her, you dog, you have.



ABSOLUTE. By all that's good, sir—

SIR ANTHONY. Zounds! say no more, I tell you. Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop; you must tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family! Come, get on, Jack. Ha! ha! ha! —Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain!

(*Pushing him out*)

MRS. MALAPROP. O! Sir Anthony!—O 10  
fie, captain! [*Exeunt severally.*]

### SCENE III. *The North Parade*

*Enter* SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER

SIR LUCIUS. [I] wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself! Upon my conscience, these officers are always in one's way in love affairs!—I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine if it had not been 20  
for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me! And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in 'em, that 25  
makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Hah! isn't this the captain coming?—faith it is!—There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! Who the 30  
devil is he talking to? (*Steps aside*)

*Enter* CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE

ABSOLUTE. To what fine purpose I have 35  
been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul!—a little gipsy!—I did not think her romance could have made her so damned absurd either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humor in my life!—I 40  
could cut my own throat or any other person's with the greatest pleasure in the world!

SIR LUCIUS. [*Aside*] Oh, faith! I'm in the luck of it. I never could have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be 45  
sure, I'm just come in the nick! Now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. (SIR LUCIUS *goes up* to ABSOLUTE)—With regard to that matter, captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you. 50

ABSOLUTE. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant—because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

SIR LUCIUS. That's no reason. For give me leave to tell you, a man may *think* an untruth as well as *speak* one.

ABSOLUTE. Very true, sir, but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they *might* stand a chance of escaping controversy.

SIR LUCIUS. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same 10 thing.

ABSOLUTE. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius: if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview; for what you can drive 15  
at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

\*SIR LUCIUS. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension—(*Bowing*) You have named the very thing I 20  
would be at.

ABSOLUTE. Very well, sir; I shall certainly not balk your inclinations.—But I should be glad you would please to explain your motives.

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it.— 25  
However, your memory is very short, or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So no more, but name your time and place.

ABSOLUTE. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening—here, by the Spring Gardens.—We 30  
shall scarcely be interrupted.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith! that same interruption in affairs of this nature shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets 35  
wind, people make such a pother that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, captain, I should take it as a particular kindness if you'd let us meet in King's-Mead-Fields, 40  
as a little business will call me there about six o'clock and I may dispatch both matters at once.

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this 45  
matter more seriously.

SIR LUCIUS. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled and my mind's at ease! [*Exit*]

*Enter FAULKLAND meeting ABSOLUTE*

ABSOLUTE. Well met—I was going to look for you. O Faulkland! all the demons of spite and disappointment have conspired against me! I'm so vexed that if I had not the prospect of a resource in being knocked o' the head by and by, I should scarce have spirits to tell you the cause.

FAULKLAND. What can you mean?—Has Lydia changed her mind?—I should have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the same object.

ABSOLUTE. Aye, just as the eyes do of a person who squints. When her *love-eye* was fixed on *me*, t'other—her eye of *duty*—was finely obliqued. But when duty bid her point *that* the same way, off t'other turned on a swivel and secured its retreat with a frown!

FAULKLAND. But what's the resource you—

ABSOLUTE. Oh, to wind up the whole, a good-natured Irishman here has (*Mimicking SIR LUCIUS*) begged leave to have the pleasure of cutting my throat—and I mean to indulge him—that's all.

FAULKLAND. Prithce, be serious!

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis fact, upon my soul! Sir Lucius O'Trigger—you know him by sight—for some affront, which I am sure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at six o'clock. 'Tis on that account I wished to see you—you must go with me.

FAULKLAND. Nay, there must be some mistake, sure.—Sir Lucius shall explain himself—and I dare say matters may be accommodated. But this evening did you say? I wish it had been any other time.

ABSOLUTE. Why? there will be light enough; there will (as Sir Lucius says) "be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot." Confound his long shots!

FAULKLAND. But I am myself a good deal ruffled by a difference I have had with Julia—my vile, tormenting temper has made me treat her so cruelly that I shall not be myself till we are reconciled.

ABSOLUTE. By heav'ns, Faulkland, you don't deserve her!

*Enter Servant, gives FAULKLAND a letter*

FAULKLAND. Oh, Jack! this is from Julia! I dread to open it—I fear it may be to take

a last leave—perhaps to bid me return her letters—and restore—Oh, how I suffer for my folly!

ABSOLUTE. Here, let me see.—(*Takes the letter and opens it*) Aye, a final sentence indeed!—'tis all over with you, faith!

FAULKLAND. Nay, Jack, don't keep me in suspense!

ABSOLUTE. Hear then—"As I am convinced that my dear Faulkland's own reflections have already upbraided him for his last unkindness to me, I will not add a word on the subject. I wish to speak with you as soon as possible. Yours ever and truly, Julia." There's stubbornness and resentment for you!—(*Gives him the letter*) Why, man, you don't seem one whit happier at this!

FAULKLAND. Oh, yes, I am; but—but—

ABSOLUTE. Confound your *buts*.—You never hear anything that would make another man bless himself, but you immediately damn it with a *but*.

FAULKLAND. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honestly; don't you think there is something forward—something indelicate in this haste to forgive? Women should never sue for reconciliation; *that* should *always* come from us. *They* should retain their coldness till *wooed* to kindness; and their *pardon*, like their love, should "not unsought be won."<sup>1</sup>

ABSOLUTE. I have not patience to listen to you—thou'rt incorrigible! so say no more on the subject. I must go to settle a few matters. Let me see you before six—remember—at my lodgings.—A poor industrious devil like me, who have toiled and drugged and plotted to gain my ends, and am at last disappointed by other people's folly—may in pity be allowed to swear and grumble a little;—but a captious sceptic in love—a slave to fretfulness and whim—who has no difficulties but of *his own* creating—is a subject more fit for ridicule than compassion! [*Exit.*]

FAULKLAND. I feel his reproaches!—yet I would not change this too exquisite nicety for the gross content with which *he* tramples on the thorns of love.—His engaging me in this duel has started an idea in my head which I will instantly pursue.—I'll use it as the touchstone of Julia's sincerity and disinterestedness. If her love prove pure and sterling

<sup>1</sup>*Paradise Lost*, VIII, 502–503.

ore, my name will rest on it with honor! and once I've stamped it there, I lay aside my doubts for ever. But if the dross of selfishness, the alloy of pride predominate, 'twill be best to leave her as a toy for some less cautious fool to sigh for! [Exit.

## ACT V

## SCENE I. JULIA'S Dressing-Room

JULIA, *sola*

[JULIA.] How this message has alarmed me! What dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge to be alone?—O Faulkland!—how many unhappy moments!—how many tears, have you cost me!

*Enter FAULKLAND, muffled up in a riding-coat*

JULIA. What means this?—why this caution, Faulkland?

FAULKLAND. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

JULIA. Heav'ns! what do you mean?

FAULKLAND. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited. Nay, start not!—the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me.—I left you fretful and passionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly. O Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!—But no more of that—your heart and promise were given to one happy in friends, character, and station! They are not bound to wait upon a solitary, guilty exile.

JULIA. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune. Had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love.—My heart has long known no other guardian—I now entrust my person to your honor—we will fly together. When safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled—and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows and tenderest comforter. Then on the bosom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to slumbering, while virtuous love, with a cherub's hand, shall

smooth the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction.

FAULKLAND. O Julia, I am bankrupt in gratitude! but the time is so pressing, it calls on you for so hasty a resolution.—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forgo, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you beside his solitary love?

JULIA. I ask not a moment. No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself; and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame and puts the seal of duty to an act of love.—But let us not linger!—Perhaps this delay—

FAULKLAND. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark.—Yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

JULIA. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy. The little I have will be sufficient to support us; and exile never should be splendid.

FAULKLAND. Aye, but in such an abject state of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed my conscience cannot justify, may haunt me in such gloomy and unsocial fits that I shall hate the tenderness that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondness!

JULIA. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you—one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

FAULKLAND. O Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

JULIA. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

FAULKLAND. I am ashamed to own that it was pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with resenting a fault which never can be repeated; but sealing, this once, my pardon,



let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and monitress and expiate my past folly by years of tender adoration.

JULIA. Hold, Faulkland!—that you are free from a crime which I before feared to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice!—These are tears of thankfulness for that! But that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express.

FAULKLAND. By heav'ns, Julia—

JULIA. Yet hear me.—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me; in his presence I pledged my hand—*joyfully* pledged it—where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my grateful duty as well as my affection; hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity—

FAULKLAND. I confess it all! yet hear—

JULIA. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity as cruel as unnecessary—a trick of such a nature, as to show me plainly that when I thought you loved me best, you even then regarded me as a mean dissembler—an artful, prudent hypocrite.

FAULKLAND. Never! never!

JULIA. I now see it is not in your nature to be content or confident in love. With this conviction, I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my persevering attention and unrepenting kindness might in time reform your temper, I should have been happy to have gained a dearer influence over you; but I will not furnish you with a licensed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault, at the expense of one who never would contend with you.

FAULKLAND. Nay, but Julia—by my soul and honor, if after this—

JULIA. But one word more.—As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity, and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you will be to charm you from that unhappy temper

which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement.—All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity, and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your *least* regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world! *[Exit.]*

FAULKLAND. She's gone—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner that riveted me to my place.—O fool!—dolt—barbarian! Cursed as I am with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind Fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side!—I must now haste to my appointment. Well my mind is tuned for such a scene. I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here.—O Love—tormentor—fiend!—whose influence, like the moon's, acting on men of dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! *[Exit.]*

*Enter Maid and LYDIA*

MAID. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now—perhaps she is only in the next room. *[Exit.]*

LYDIA. Heigh ho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

*Enter JULIA*

LYDIA. O Julia, I have come to you with such an appetite for consolation.—Lud! child, what's the matter with you? You have been crying!—I'll be hanged, if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you.

JULIA. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness. Something *has* flurried me a little—nothing that you can guess at.—*(Aside)* I would not accuse Faulkland to a sister!

LYDIA. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be?

JULIA. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair. Had young Absolute been the person you took him for, I should not have accepted your confidence on the subject with-

out a serious endeavor to counteract your caprice.

LYDIA. So! then I see I have been deceived by every one! But I don't care—I'll never have him.

JULIA. Nay, Lydia—

LYDIA. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield<sup>1</sup> bargain of at last? There had I <sup>10</sup> projected one of the most sentimental elopements—so becoming a disguise—so amiable a ladder of ropes!—conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson<sup>2</sup>—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop—and such paragraphs in <sup>15</sup> the newspapers!—Oh, I shall die with disappointment!

JULIA. I don't wonder at it!

LYDIA. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect but, after a deal of flimsy preparation with a bishop's license and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country-church, and have an unmannerly, fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish <sup>25</sup> to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster! Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

JULIA. Melancholy, indeed!

LYDIA. How mortifying, to remember the <sup>30</sup> dear delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow!—How often have I stole forth, in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue! <sup>35</sup> There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension! And while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his <sup>40</sup> flame, and 'glow with mutual ardor!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love.

JULIA. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I should chide you only by laughing heartily at you; <sup>45</sup> but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you not to let a man who loves you with sincerity suffer that unhappiness from your *caprice*, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

LYDIA. O lud! what has brought my aunt here?

*Enter* MRS. MALAPROP, FAG, and DAVID

MRS. MALAPROP. So! so! here's fine work! —here's fine suicide, paracide, and salivation <sup>5</sup> going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

JULIA. For Heaven's sake, madam, what's the meaning of this?

MRS. MALAPROP. That gentleman can <sup>10</sup> tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

LYDIA. (*To* FAG) Do, sir, will you inform us?

FAG. Ma'am, I should hold myself very deficient in every requisite that forms the man <sup>15</sup> of breeding if I delayed a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady so deeply interested in the affair as you are.

LYDIA. But quick!—quick, sir!

FAG. True, ma'am, as you say, one should <sup>20</sup> be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for should we be tedious, perhaps while we are flourishing on the subject two or three lives may be lost!

LYDIA. O patience!—do, ma'am, for Heaven's <sup>25</sup> sake! tell us what is the matter.

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

LYDIA. Then, prithee, sir, be brief.

FAG. Why, then, ma'am, as to murder—I cannot take upon me to say; and as to slaughter or man-slaughter, that will be as the jury <sup>30</sup> finds it.

LYDIA. But who, sir—who are engaged in this?

FAG. Faith, ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I should be very sorry anything <sup>35</sup> was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman! We have lived much together, and always on terms.

LYDIA. But who is this?—who? who? who?

FAG. My master, ma'am—my master—I speak of my master.

LYDIA. Heavens! What, Captain Absolute.

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, to be sure, you are frightened now!

JULIA. But who are with him, sir?

FAG. As to the rest, ma'am, this gentleman <sup>50</sup> can inform you better than I.

JULIA. (*To* DAVID) Do speak, friend.

DAVID. Look'ee, my lady—by the mass! there's mischief going on. Folks don't use to

<sup>1</sup>Formerly the London cattle-market.

<sup>2</sup>Eloping couples frequently fled to Scotland.

meet for amusement with firearms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say, has an angry savor.

JULIA. But who is there beside Captain Absolute, friend?

DAVID. My poor master—under favor for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, Squire Acres.—Then comes Squire Faulkland.

JULIA. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavor to prevent mischief.

MRS. MALAPROP. O fie! it would be very inelegant in us; we should only participate things.

DAVID. Ah! do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives—they are desperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that bloodthirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir Lucius O'Trigger? O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape?—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrefactions!

LYDIA. What are we to do, madam?

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief!—Here, friend, you can show us the place?

FAG. If you please, ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony.

[Exit DAVID.]

MRS. MALAPROP. Come, girls! this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, sir, you're our envoy—lead the way, and we'll precede.

FAG. Not a step before the ladies, for the world!

MRS. MALAPROP. You're sure you know the spot?

FAG. I think I can find it, ma'am; and one good thing is, we shall hear the report of the pistols as we draw near, so we can't well miss them;—never fear, ma'am, never fear.

[Exeunt, he talking.]

## SCENE II. South Parade

Enter ABSOLUTE, putting his sword under his great-coat

ABSOLUTE. A sword seen in the streets of Bath would raise as great an alarm as a mad dog.—How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I shall be obliged to go

without him at last.—Oh, the devil! here's Sir Anthony! How shall I escape him?

(Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off)

Enter SIR ANTHONY

SIR ANTHONY. How one may be deceived at a little distance! Only that I see he don't know me, I could have sworn that was Jack!—Hey! 'Gad's life! it is.—Why, Jack, you dog!—what are you afraid of? Hey—sure I'm right.—Why Jack, Jack Absolute!

(Goes up to him)

ABSOLUTE. Really, sir, you have the advantage of me. I don't remember ever to have had the honor—my name is Saunderson, at your service.

SIR ANTHONY. Sir, I beg your pardon—I took you—hey!—why, zounds! it is—Stay—(Looks up to his face) So, so—your humble servant, Mr. Saunderson! Why, you scoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, a joke, sir, a joke! I came here on purpose to look for you, sir.

SIR ANTHONY. You did! well, I am glad you were so lucky. But what are you muffled up so for?—what's this for?—hey?

ABSOLUTE. 'Tis cool, sir, isn't it?—rather chilly somehow.—But I shall be late—I have a particular engagement.

SIR ANTHONY. Stay!—Why, I thought you were looking for me!—Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

ABSOLUTE. Going, sir?

SIR ANTHONY. Aye, where are you going?

ABSOLUTE. Where am I going?

SIR ANTHONY. You unmannerly puppy!

ABSOLUTE. I was going, sir, to—to—to—to Lydia—sir, to Lydia—to make matters up if I could—and I was looking for you, sir, to—to—

SIR ANTHONY. To go with you, I suppose.—Well, come along.

ABSOLUTE. Oh! zounds! no, sir, not for the world!—I wished to meet with you, sir,—to—to—to—You find it cool, I'm sure, sir—you'd better not stay out.

SIR ANTHONY. Cool!—not at all.—Well, Jack—and what will you say to Lydia?

ABSOLUTE. Oh, sir, beg her pardon, humor her—promise and vow; but I detain you, sir,—consider the cold air on your gout.

SIR ANTHONY. Oh, not at all!—not at all! I'm in no hurry.—Ah! Jack, you



youngsters, when once you are wounded here.  
(*Putting his hand to ABSOLUTE's breast*) Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

ABSOLUTE. Nothing, sir—nothing.

SIR ANTHONY. What's this?—here's some- 5  
thing damned hard.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, trinkets, sir! trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia.

SIR ANTHONY. Nay, let me see your taste.  
(*Pulls his coat open; the sword falls*) Trin- 10  
kets! a bauble for Lydia!—zounds! sirrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

ABSOLUTE. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, sir, though I didn't mean to tell you till afterwards.

SIR ANTHONY. You didn't?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly!

ABSOLUTE. Sir, I'll explain to you.—You know, sir, Lydia is romantic—dev'lish ro-  
mantic, and very absurd of course. Now, 20  
sir, I intend, if she refuses to forgive me, to unsheath this sword, and swear I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

SIR ANTHONY. Fall upon fiddlestick's end!—why, I suppose it is the very thing that 25  
would please her.—Get along, you fool!

ABSOLUTE. Well, sir, you shall hear of my success—you shall hear.—“O Lydia!—for-  
give me, or this pointed steel”—says I.

SIR ANTHONY. “O booby! stab away and 30  
welcome”—says she.—Get along! and damn your trinkets!

[*Exit ABSOLUTE.*]

*Enter DAVID, running*

DAVID. Stop him! stop him! Murder! 35  
Thief! Fire!—Stop, fire! Stop, fire!—O Sir Anthony—call! call! bid 'em stop! Murder! Fire!

SIR ANTHONY. Fire! Murder!—Where?

DAVID. Oons! he's out of sight, and I'm 40  
out of breath for my part. O Sir Anthony, why didn't you stop him? why didn't you stop him?

SIR ANTHONY. Zounds! the fellow's mad!  
—Stop whom? stop Jack?

DAVID. Aye, the captain, sir!—there's murder and slaughter—

SIR ANTHONY. Murder?

DAVID. Aye, please you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all sorts of slaugh- 50  
ter to be seen in the fields; there's fighting going on, sir—bloody sword-and-gun fighting.

SIR ANTHONY. Who are going to fight, dunce?

DAVID. Everybody that I know of, Sir Anthony—everybody is going to fight; my poor master, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, your son, the captain—

SIR ANTHONY. Oh, the dog! I see his tricks.—Do you know the place?

DAVID. King's-Mead-Fields.

SIR ANTHONY. You know the way?

DAVID. Not an inch; but I'll call the mayor  
—aldermen—constables—church-wardens—  
and beadles; we can't be too many to part  
them.

SIR ANTHONY. Come along—give me  
your shoulder! we'll get assistance as we go  
15—the lying villain!—Well, I shall be in such  
a frenzy!—So—this was the history of his  
damned trinkets! I'll bauble him!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *King's-Mead-Fields*

*Enter SIR LUCIUS and ACRES, with pistols*

ACRES. By my valor! then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels  
and aims!—I say it is a good distance.

SIR LUCIUS. Is it for muskets or small  
field-pieces? Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres,  
you must leave those things to me.—Stay  
now—I'll show you.—(*Measures paces along  
the stage*) There now, that is a very pretty  
distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

ACRES. Zounds! we might as well fight in  
a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the  
farther he is off, the cooler I shall take my  
35 aim.

SIR LUCIUS. Faith! then I suppose you  
would aim at him best of all if he was out of  
sight!

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius; but I should think  
40 forty, or eight and thirty yards—

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! pho! nonsense! three  
or four feet between the mouths of your pistols  
is as good as a mile.

ACRES. Odds bullets, no!—by my valor!  
45 there is no merit in killing him so near. Do,  
my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down  
at a long shot!—a long shot, Sir Lucius, if  
you love me!

SIR LUCIUS. Well—the gentleman's friend  
50 and I must settle that. —But tell me now, Mr.  
Acres; in case of an accident, is there any little  
will or commission I could execute for you?

ACRES. I am much obliged to you, Sir  
Lucius, but I don't understand—

SIR LUCIUS. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk—and if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it—I say it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

ACRES. A quietus!

SIR LUCIUS. For instance, now—if that should be the case—would you choose to be pickled and sent home?—or would it be the same to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

ACRES. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

SIR LUCIUS. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

SIR LUCIUS. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

ACRES. Odds files!—I've practiced that—there, Sir Lucius—there. (*Puts himself in an attitude*) A side-front, hey? Odd! I'll make myself small enough; I'll stand edge-ways.

SIR LUCIUS. Now—you're quite out—for if you stand so when I take my aim—

(*Leveling at him*)

ACRES. Zounds! Sir Lucius—are you sure it is not cocked?

SIR LUCIUS. Never fear.

ACRES. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! be easy.—Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it misses a vital part of your right side—'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left!

ACRES. A vital part! Oh, my poor vitals!

SIR LUCIUS. But, there—fix yourself so—(*Placing him*) Let him see the broad-side of your full front—there!—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do any harm at all.

ACRES. Clean through me!—a ball or two clean through me!

SIR LUCIUS. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

ACRES. Look'ee! Sir Lucius—I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one; so, by my valor! I will stand edge-ways.

SIR LUCIUS. (*Looking at his watch*) Sure

they don't mean to disappoint us—Hah?—no, faith—I think I see them coming.

ACRES. Hey!—what!—coming?—

SIR LUCIUS. Aye.—Who are those yonder getting over the stile?

ACRES. There are two of them, indeed!—Well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius?—we—we—we—won't run.

SIR LUCIUS. Run!

ACRES. No—I say—we *won't* run, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS. What the devil's the matter with you?

ACRES. Nothing—nothing—my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold, somehow, as I did.

SIR LUCIUS. O fie!—consider your honor.

ACRES. Aye—true—my honor. Do, Sir Lucius, hedge in a word or two every now and then about my honor.

SIR LUCIUS. (*Looking*) Well, here they're coming.

ACRES. Sir Lucius—if I wa'n't with you, I should almost think I was afraid.—If my valor should leave me!—Valor will come and go.

SIR LUCIUS. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

ACRES. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes—my valor is certainly going!—it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

SIR LUCIUS. Your honor—your honor!—Here they are.

ACRES. O mercy!—now—that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

*Enter FAULKLAND and ABSOLUTE*

SIR LUCIUS. Gentlemen, your most obedient.—Hah!—what—Captain Absolute?—So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend—then to proceed to business on your own account.

ACRES. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

ABSOLUTE. Hark'ee, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

SIR LUCIUS. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly.—So, Mr. Beverley, (*To FAULKLAND*) if you'll choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

FAULKLAND. My weapons, sir!

ACRES. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends.

SIR LUCIUS. What, sir, did you not come here to fight Mr. Acres?

FAULKLAND. Not I, upon my word, sir.

SIR LUCIUS. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game, you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party by sitting out.

ABSOLUTE. O pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

FAULKLAND. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter—

ACRES. No, no, Mr. Faulkland; I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian.—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

SIR LUCIUS. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him, I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

ACRES. Zounds,—Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face! If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

ABSOLUTE. Hold, Bob—let me set you right; there is no such man as Beverley in the case.—The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

SIR LUCIUS. Well, this is lucky.—Now you have an opportunity—

ACRES. What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute?—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Zounds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be so unnatural.

SIR LUCIUS. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valor has oozed away with a vengeance!

ACRES. Not in the least! Odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you a "snug lying" in the "Abbey here"; or "pickle" you, and send you over to Blunder-

buss Hall, or any of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

ACRES. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a *coward*; coward was the word, by my valor!

SIR LUCIUS. Well, sir?

ACRES. Look'ee, Sir Lucius; 'tisn't that I mind the word *coward*—*coward* may be said in joke. But if you had called me a *poltroon*, odds daggers and balls—

SIR LUCIUS. Well, sir?

ACRES. —I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

SIR LUCIUS. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

ABSOLUTE. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres.—He is a most "determined dog"—called in the country "Fighting Bob."—He generally "kills a man a week"—don't you, Bob?

ACRES. Aye—at home!

SIR LUCIUS. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin; so come out, my little counselor —(*Draws his sword*) and ask the gentleman whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him.

ABSOLUTE. Come on then, sir (*Draws*); since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

*Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, and the Women*

DAVID. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular, and bind his hands over to their good behavior.

SIR ANTHONY. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy.—How came you in a duel, sir?

ABSOLUTE. Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his Majesty.

SIR ANTHONY. Here's a pretty fellow; I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his Majesty!—Zounds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the King's sword against one of his subjects?

ABSOLUTE. Sir! I tell you, that gentleman called me out without explaining his reasons.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Gad!—Sir, how came you to call my son out without explaining your reasons!

SIR LUCIUS. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honor could not brook.



SIR ANTHONY. Zounds! Jack, how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honor could not brook?

MRS. MALAPROP. Come, come, let's have no honor before ladies.—Captain Absolute, come here; how could you intimidate us so?—Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

ABSOLUTE. For fear I should be killed or escape, ma'am?

MRS. MALAPROP. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced; speak, child.

SIR LUCIUS. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here. I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence—Now mark—

LYDIA. What is it you mean, sir?

SIR LUCIUS. Come, come, Delia, we must be serious now—this is no time for trifling.

LYDIA. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand and solicit the return of his affections.

ABSOLUTE. Oh, my little angel, say you so?—Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here; with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you—I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced that I should not fear to support a real injury—you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency. I ask your pardon. But for this lady, while honored with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

SIR ANTHONY. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

ACRES. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to anything in the world; and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valor! I'll live a bachelor.

SIR LUCIUS. Captain, give me your hand—an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own handwriting here—  
(Takes out letters)

MRS. MALAPROP. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery!—Sir Lucius, perhaps there's some mistake; perhaps I can illuminate—

SIR LUCIUS. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business—Miss Languish, are you my Delia, or not?

LYDIA. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.  
(LYDIA and ABSOLUTE walk aside)

MRS. MALAPROP. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—

ungrateful, as you are, I own the soft impeachment—pardon my blushes, I am Delia.

SIR LUCIUS. You Delia—pho! pho! be easy.

MRS. MALAPROP. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

SIR LUCIUS. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension, and whether you or Lucy have put this trick on me, I am equally beholden to you. And to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

ABSOLUTE. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's our friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

SIR LUCIUS. Hah! little Valor!—here, will you make your fortune?

ACRES. Odds wrinkles! no!—But give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of *pickling* me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

SIR ANTHONY. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

MRS. MALAPROP. O Sir Anthony—men are all barbarians.

(All retire but JULIA and FAULKLAND)

JULIA. (Aside) He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen; there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me. O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

FAULKLAND. Julia!—How can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet Hope is the child of Penitence.

JULIA. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

FAULKLAND. Now I shall be blessed indeed!

(SIR ANTHONY comes forward)

SIR ANTHONY. What's going on here?—So you have been quarreling too, I warrant. Come, Julia, I never interfered before, but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland seemed to proceed from what he calls the *delicacy* and *warmth* of his affection for you.—

There, marry him directly, Julia; you'll find he'll mend surprisingly!

*(The rest come forward)*

SIR LUCIUS. Come, now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better.

ACRES. You are right, Sir Lucius.—So, Jack, I wish you joy.—Mr. Faulkland, the same.—Ladies, come now; to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

SIR ANTHONY. 'Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples and a husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

FAULKLAND. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine, for having, by her gentleness and candor, reformed the unhappy temper of one who by it made wretched whom he loved most and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

ABSOLUTE. Well, Jack,<sup>1</sup> we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love—with this difference only, that *you* always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

LYDIA. Was always obliged to *me* for it—hey, Mr. Modesty?<sup>2</sup>—But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

JULIA. Then let us study to preserve it so, and while Hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colors which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging Passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropped!

*[Exeunt Omnes.]*

## EPILOGUE

By THE AUTHOR

Ladies, for *you*—I heard our poet say—  
He'd try to coax some *moral* from his play:

<sup>1</sup>*i.e.*, Faulkland.

"One moral's plain"—cried I—"without more fuss;

Man's social happiness all rests on us;  
Through all the drama—whether damned or not,

Love gilds the *scene*, and *women* guide the *plot*.

From ev'ry rank obedience is our due—  
D'ye doubt?—The world's great stage shall prove it true."

The cit<sup>2</sup>—well skilled to shun domestic strife,

Will sup abroad;—but first—he'll ask his *wife*:

John Trot, his friend—for once, will do the same,

But then—he'll just "step home to tell my dame."

The surly squire—at noon resolves to rule,  
And half the day—zounds! madam is a fool!  
Convinced at night, the vanquished victor says,

"Ah, Kate! you women have such coaxing ways."

The jolly toper chides each tardy blade,—  
Till reeling Bacchus calls on Love for aid:  
Then with each toast he sees fair bumpers swim,

And kisses Chloe on the sparkling brim!  
Nay, I have heard that statesmen—great and wise—

Will *sometimes* counsel with a lady's eyes!  
The servile suitors watch her various face,  
She smiles preferment—or she frowns disgrace;  
Curtseys a pension here—there nods a place.

Nor with less awe, in scenes of humble life,  
Is *viewed* the *mistress*, or is *heard* the *wife*.  
The poorest peasant of the poorest soil,  
The child of poverty, and heir to toil,  
Early from radiant Love's impartial light  
Steals one small spark, to cheer his world of night;

Dear spark!—that oft through winter's chilling woes

Is all the warmth his little cottage knows!  
The wandering tar, who not for *years* has pressed

The widowed partner of his *day* of rest,  
On the cold deck—far from her arms removed,  
Still hums the ditty which his Susan loved;  
And while around the cadence rude is blown,  
The boatswain whistles in a softer tone.

<sup>2</sup>Citizen.

The soldier, fairly proud of wounds and toil,  
 Pants for the *triumph* of his Nancy's smile!  
 But ere the battle should he list her cries  
 The lover trembles—and the hero dies!  
 That heart, by war and honor steeled to fear, 5  
 Droops on a sigh and sickens at a tear!

But ye more cautious—ye nice judging  
 few,  
 Who give to Beauty only Beauty's due,  
 Though friends to Love—ye view with deep 10  
 regret

Our conquests marred, our triumphs incom-  
 plete,

Till polished wit more lasting charms disclose,  
 And Judgment fix the darts which Beauty  
 throws!

In female breasts did Sense and Merit rule,  
 The lover's mind would ask no other school;  
 Shamed into sense—the scholars of our eyes,  
 Our beaux from *gallantry* would soon be wise;  
 Would gladly light, their homage to improve,  
 The lamp of knowledge at the torch of Love!



## WILLIAM COWPER (1731-1800)

Cowper was born on 15 November, 1731. His father was the Reverend John Cowper, Rector of Great Berkhamstead and Chaplain to George II; his mother was Ann Donne Cowper, probably a descendant of the poet and divine, John Donne. When he was seven years old Cowper was sent to a school kept by a Dr. Pitman, but after two years he had to withdraw from the school on account of trouble with his eyes. Later, in 1741, he was sent to Westminster School, where he remained until 1748. Some of his schoolfellows were George Colman, Robert Lloyd, Charles Churchill, R. Cumberland, Warren Hastings, and Elijah Impey. The first three of these were among his close friends, as was also one of the masters, Vincent Bourne. As late as 1781 Cowper wrote, "I love the memory of Vinny Bourne. I think him a better Latin poet than Tibullus, Propertius, Ausonius, or any of the writers in *his* way, except Ovid, and not at all inferior to *him*."

. . . He was so good-natured, and so indolent, that I lost more than I got by him; for he made me as idle as himself. He was such a sloven, as if he had trusted to his genius as a cloak for everything that could disgust you in his person; and indeed in his writings he has almost made amends for all." Some months after he left Westminster Cowper was articled to a solicitor in London, where a fellow law-clerk was Edward Thurlow, later Lord Chancellor. Cowper says that while ostensibly studying the law he spent his days chiefly "in giggling and making giggle" with his two cousins, daughters of his uncle Ashley Cowper. With one of them, Theodora, he fell in love, but the girl's father would not permit an engagement. In 1752 Cowper went to live in the Middle Temple, and in 1754 he was called to the bar. He made no attempt, however, to practice the law, but lived rather aimlessly, doing some literary work and disporting himself with fellow-members of the Nonsense Club. In 1763 Cowper was nominated Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords by his cousin Major Cowper, who had the disposal of the office. For some years Cowper had been more or less subject to melancholy, and evidently at this time his mind was unable to stand excitement. Owing to some dispute over his nomination to the clerkship it was necessary for Cowper to appear before the bar of the House of Lords, and the prospect of this ordeal was too much for him. He broke down, made several attempts at suicide, and finally became insane,

so that he had to be removed by his brother to an asylum, where he remained until June, 1765. Cowper's attacks of melancholy were apparently connected with religious emotions and fears which gradually increased in strength, and his madness took the form of a conviction that he was eternally damned in punishment for some sin. By the summer of 1765 he had completely recovered his sanity, but through the remainder of his life he was subject to attacks of deep melancholy which several times brought temporary returns of insanity; and during his last six or seven years he scarcely ever emerged from the black terrors conjured up by his troubled mind. Cowper spent the rest of his life in quiet country villages, living first at Huntingdon, then at Olney, later at Weston, and finally with his cousin John Johnson at East Dereham in Norfolk, where he died on 25 April, 1800, and where he was buried. During the greater number of these years Cowper was surrounded by good friends, without whose society, encouragement, and help his poetry never would have been written and his life, in all probability, would have been a complete wreck. Chief among these were Mrs. Unwin, from whom he was never separated from 1765 until her death in 1796, and whom he would have married had it not been for his third attack of madness (brought on, probably, by the mistaken religious zeal of his friend, the Rev. John Newton, early in 1773); Lady Austen who first met him in 1781, who became strongly attached to him and probably wanted to marry him; and his cousin Lady Hesketh, sister of the Theodora Cowper whom he had loved in his youth.

After 1765 Cowper's mental health demanded that he have a settled occupation of some kind. The more busily he was occupied in some congenial pursuit the less was the danger of renewed insanity. Gardening served his turn, as did carpentry for a time, then drawing—he drew, he says, "many figures . . . which had, at least, the merit of being unparalleled by any production either of art or nature"—and finally poetry. He was turned to poetry by Mrs. Unwin, and he did some of his best work as the result of suggestions made by Lady Austen. He says himself, "I have no more right to the name of a poet than a maker of mouse-traps has to that of an engineer; but my little exploits in this way have at times amused me so much that I have often wished myself a good one. Such a talent in verse as mine is like a child's rattle—very entertaining to the

trifler that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside. But it has served to rid me of some melancholy moments, for I only take it up as a gentleman performer does his fiddle." And again, "Swift's darling motto was, *Vive la bagatelle*. . . . *La bagatelle* has no enemy in me, though it has neither so warm a friend nor so able a one as it had in him. If I trifle, and merely trifle, it is because I am reduced to it by necessity—a melancholy, that nothing else so effectually disperses, engages me sometimes in the arduous task of being merry by force. And, strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been written in the saddest mood, and, but for that saddest mood, perhaps had never been written at all. To say truth, it would be but a shocking vagary, should the mariners on board a ship buffeted by a terrible storm employ themselves in fiddling and dancing; yet sometimes much such a part act I." Yet writing thus for amusement and distraction often on subjects that came to him from others, Cowper "finished, and pol-

ished, and touched, and retouched, with the utmost care." And it has been well said of him that "no truer poet . . . ever wrote the English language. He did greater things than he knew. . . . Neither fancy, nor learning, nor philosophy came between him and his object. His creed does occasionally; his sympathetic tenderness always. Otherwise it is the thing itself, river, tree, or hill, that he gives us in naked simplicity. That simplicity was the central element in his character, and it is the secret both of what he confessed and of what he discovered. The perfectly simple can ask questions and reveal facts which no one else can reveal or ask. So it was with Cowper. He takes up his pen to amuse himself, to describe his walks, and his friends, and his garden, and his pets, and in the result finds himself, as it were by accident, a great poet, and a poet of a new order. He, more than any one else, discovered that a man may be himself, and may tell the plain truth, and yet be a poet" (J. C. Bailey, Introduction to Cowper's *Poems*).

## THE TASK<sup>1</sup>

### BOOK I

#### THE SOFA

ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST BOOK.—Historical deduction of seats, from the stool to the Sofa—A School-boy's ramble—A walk in the country—The scene described—Rural sounds as well as sights delightful—Another walk—Mistake concerning the charms of solitude corrected—Colonnades commended—Alcove, and the view from it—The wilderness—The grove—The thresher—The necessity and the benefits of exercise—The works of nature superior to, and in some instances inimitable by, art—The wearisomeness of what is commonly called a life of pleasure—Change of scene sometimes expedient—A common described, and the character of crazy Kate introduced—Gypsies—The blessings of civilized life—That state most favorable to virtue—The South Sea islanders compassionate, but chiefly Omai—His present state of mind supposed—Civilized life friendly to virtue, but not great cities—Great cities, and

<sup>1</sup>"The history of the following production is briefly this:—A lady, fond of blank verse, demanded a poem of that kind from the author, and gave him the SOFA for a subject. He obeyed; and, having much leisure, connected another subject with it; and, pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him, brought forth at length, instead of the trifle which he at first intended, a serious affair—a Volume!" (Cowper's "Advertisement," prefixed to the first edition of *The Task*.) The lady was Lady Austen, and Cowper began writing the poem probably in July, 1783. The complete poem, of which only the first book is here printed, consists of six books. It was published in 1785, in a volume containing also three shorter poems, one of which was *The Diverting History of John Gilpin*.

London in particular, allowed their due praise, but censured—*Fête champêtre*—The book concludes with a reflection on the fatal effects of dissipation and effeminacy upon our public measures.

I SING the Sofa. I, who lately sang  
Truth, Hope, and Charity,<sup>2</sup> and touched with  
awe

The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,  
Escaped with pain from that advent'rous  
flight,

Now seek repose upon an humbler theme; 5  
The theme though humble, yet august and  
proud

Th' occasion—for the Fair commands the  
song.

Time was, when clothing sumptuous or for  
use,  
Save their own painted skins, our sires had  
none.

As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth,  
Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile: 11  
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock  
Washed by the sea, or on the gravelly bank  
Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,  
Fearless of wrong, reposed his weary strength.  
Those barb'rous ages past, succeeded next 16  
The birth-day of invention; weak at first,  
Dull in design, and clumsy to perform.  
Joint-stools were then created; on three legs  
Upborne they stood. Three legs upholding  
firm 20

A massy slab, in fashion square or round.

<sup>2</sup>Titles of three of the pieces in Cowper's first volume of poems, published in 1782.

On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,  
And swayed the scepter of his infant realms:  
And such in ancient halls and mansions drear  
May still be seen; but perforated sore, 25  
And drilled in holes, the solid oak is found,  
By worms voracious eating through and  
through.

At length a generation more refined  
Improved the simple plan; made three legs  
four,

Gave them a twisted form vermicular, 30  
And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding  
stuffed,

Induced a splendid cover, green and blue,  
Yellow and red, of tap'stry richly wrought,  
And woven close, or needle-work sublime.  
There might ye see the peony spread wide, 35  
The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his  
lass,

Lap-dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,  
And parrots with twin cherries in their beak.

Now came the cane from India, smooth and  
bright

With nature's varnish; severed into stripes 40  
That interlaced each other, these supplied  
Of texture firm a lattice-work, that braced  
The new machine, and it became a chair.  
But restless was the chair; the back erect  
Distressed the weary loins, that felt no ease; 45  
The slipp'ry seat betrayed the sliding part  
That pressed it, and the feet hung dangling  
down,

Anxious in vain to find the distant floor.  
These for the rich: the rest, whom fate had  
placed

In modest mediocrity, content 50  
With base materials, sat on well-tanned hides,  
Obdurate and unyielding, glassy smooth,  
With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,  
Or scarlet crevel,<sup>1</sup> in the cushion fixed;  
If cushion might be called, what harder  
seemed 55

Than the firm oak of which the frame was  
formed.

No want of timber then was felt or feared  
In Albion's happy isle. The lumber stood  
Pond'rous and fixed by its own massy weight.  
But elbows still were wanting; these, some  
say, 60

An alderman of Cripplegate contrived:  
And some ascribe th' invention to a priest  
Burly and big, and studious of his ease.  
But, rude at first, and not with easy slope  
Receding wide, they pressed against the ribs,  
And bruised the side; and, elevated high, 66  
Taught the raised shoulders to invade the ears.  
Long time elapsed or e'er our rugged sires  
Complained, though incommodiously pent in,

And ill at ease behind. The ladies first 70  
'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.  
Ingenious fancy, never better pleased  
Than when employed t' accommodate the  
fair,

Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devised  
The soft settee; one elbow at each end, 75

And in the midst an elbow it received,  
United yet divided, twain at once.

So sit two kings of Brentford on one throne;  
And so two citizens who take the air,  
Close packed, and smiling, in a chaise and one.  
But relaxation of the languid frame, 81

By soft recumbency of outstretched limbs,  
Was bliss reserved for happier days. So slow  
The growth of what is excellent; so hard

T' attain perfection in this nether world. 85  
Thus first necessity invented stools,  
Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,

And luxury th' accomplished SOFA last.  
The nurse sleeps sweetly, hired to watch the  
sick, 89

Whom snoring she disturbs. As sweetly he,  
Who quits the coach-box at the midnight hour

To sleep within the carriage more secure,  
His legs depending at the open door.

Sweet sleep enjoys the curate in his desk,  
The tedious rector drawing o'er his head; 95

And sweet the clerk below. But neither sleep  
Of lazy nurse, who snores the sick man dead,

Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour  
To slumber in the carriage more secure,

Nor sleep enjoyed by curate in his desk, 100  
Nor yet the dozings of the clerk, are sweet,

Compared with the repose the SOFA yields.

Oh, may I live exempted (while I live  
Guiltless of pampered appetite obscene)

From pangs arthritic that infest the toe 105  
Of libertine excess. The SOFA suits

The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,  
Though on a SOFA, may I never feel:

For I have loved the rural walk through lanes  
Of grassy swarth, close cropped by nibbling  
sheep, 110

And skirted thick with intertexture firm  
Of thorny boughs; have loved the rural walk

O'er hills, through valleys, and by rivers'  
brink,

E'er since a truant boy I passed my bounds  
T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames;

And still remember, nor without regret 116  
Of hours that sorrow since has much endeared,

How oft, my slice of pocket store consumed,  
Still hung'ring, penniless and far from home,

I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws, 120  
Or blushing crabs,<sup>2</sup> or berries, that emboss

The bramble, black as jet, or sloes<sup>3</sup> austere.

<sup>2</sup>Hip, ripened fruit of rosebush; haw, fruit of hawthorn; crab, crab-apple.

<sup>3</sup>Fruit of the blackthorn.

<sup>1</sup>Worst yarn slackly twisted or, as here, knotted.



Hard fare! but such as boyish appetite  
 Disdains not; nor the palate, undepraved  
 By culinary arts, unsav'ry deems. 125  
 No SOFA then awaited my return;  
 Nor SOFA then I needed. Youth repairs  
 His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil  
 Incurring short fatigue; and, though our years  
 As life declines speed rapidly away, 130  
 And not a year but pilfers as he goes  
 Some youthful grace that age would gladly  
 keep;  
 A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees  
 Their length and color from the locks they  
 spare;  
 Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot 135  
 That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the  
 fence,  
 That play of lungs, inhaling and again  
 Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes  
 Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me, 139  
 Mine have not pilfered yet; nor yet impaired  
 My relish of fair prospect; scenes that soothed  
 Or charmed me young, no longer young, I find  
 Still soothing and of pow'r to charm me still.  
 And witness, dear companion of my walks,<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive  
 Fast locked in mine, with pleasure such as  
 love, 146  
 Confirmed by long experience of thy worth  
 And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire—  
 Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long.  
 Thou know'st my praise of nature most  
 sincere, 150  
 And that my raptures are not conjured up  
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,  
 But genuine, and art partner of them all.  
 How oft upon yon eminence our pace  
 Has slackened to a pause, and we have borne  
 The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it  
 blew, 156  
 While admiration, feeding at the eye,  
 And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.  
 Thence with what pleasure have we just dis-  
 cerned  
 The distant plow slow moving, and beside  
 His lab'ring team, that swerved not from the  
 track, 161  
 The sturdy swain diminished to a boy!  
 Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain  
 Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,  
 Conducts the eye along its sinuous course 165  
 Delighted. There, fast rooted in his bank,  
 Stand, never overlooked, our fav'rite elms,  
 That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;  
 While far beyond, and overthwart the stream  
 That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale, 170  
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds;  
 Displaying on its varied side the grace

Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square  
 tow'r,  
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful  
 bells  
 Just undulates upon the list'ning ear, 175  
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote.  
 Scenes must be beautiful, which, daily viewed,  
 Please daily, and whose novelty survives  
 Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.  
 Praise justly due to those that I describe.<sup>2</sup> 180  
 Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds,  
 Exhilarate the spirit, and restore  
 The tone of languid nature. Mighty winds,  
 That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading  
 wood  
 Of ancient growth, make music not unlike 185  
 The dash of ocean on his winding shore,  
 And lull the spirit while they fill the mind;  
 Unnumbered branches waving in the blast,  
 And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once.  
 Nor less composure waits upon the roar 190  
 Of distant floods, or on the softer voice  
 Of neighb'ring fountain, or of rills that slip  
 Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they  
 fall  
 Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length  
 In matted grass, that with a livelier green 195  
 Betrays the secret of their silent course.  
 Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,  
 But animated nature sweeter still,  
 To soothe and satisfy the human ear.  
 Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one  
 The livelong night: nor these alone, whose  
 notes 201  
 Nice fingered art must emulate in vain,  
 But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime  
 In still repeated circles, screaming loud,  
 The jay, the pie,<sup>3</sup> and e'en the boding owl 205  
 That hails the rising moon, have charms for  
 me.  
 Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,  
 Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever  
 reigns, 208  
 And only there, please highly for their sake.  
 Peace to the artist, whose ingenious thought  
 Devised the weather-house,<sup>4</sup> that useful toy!  
 Fearless of humid air and gathering rains,  
 Forth steps the man—an emblem of myself!  
 More delicate, his tim'rous mate retires. 214  
 When Winter soaks the fields, and female feet,  
 Too weak to struggle with tenacious clay,  
 Or ford the rivulets, are best at home,  
 The task of new discov'ries falls on me.

<sup>2</sup>The scenes described are those encountered in a walk from Olney to Weston.

<sup>3</sup>Magpie.

<sup>4</sup>A substitute for the barometer, still occasionally to be seen. It is so contrived that the figure of a man comes forward when bad weather is to be expected, and that of a woman when good.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Unwin.

At such a season, and with such a charge,  
Once went I forth: and found, till then un-  
known, 220

A cottage, whither oft we since repair:  
'Tis perched upon the green-hill top, but, close  
Environed with a ring of branching elms  
That overhang the thatch, itself unseen,  
Peeps at the vale below; so thick beset 225  
With foliage of such dark redundant growth,  
I called the low-roofed lodge the *peasant's nest*.  
And, hidden as it is, and far remote  
From such unpleasing sounds as haunt the ear  
In village or in town, the bay of curs 230  
Incessant, clinking hammers, grinding wheels,  
And infants clam'rous whether pleased or  
pained,

Oft have I wished the peaceful covert mine.  
Here, I have said, at least I should possess  
The poet's treasure, silence, and indulge 235  
The dreams of fancy, tranquil and secure.  
Vain thought! the dweller in that still retreat  
Dearly obtains the refuge it affords.  
Its elevated site forbids the wretch  
To drink sweet waters of the crystal well; 240  
He dips his bowl into the weedy ditch,  
And, heavy-laden, brings his bev'rage home,  
Far-fetched and little worth; nor seldom waits,  
Dependent on the baker's punctual call,  
To hear his creaking panniers at the door, 245  
Angry and sad, and his last crust consumed.  
So farewell envy of the *peasant's nest*!  
If solitude make scant the means of life,  
Society for me!—thou seeming sweet,  
Be still a pleasing object in my view; 250  
My visit still, but never mine abode.

Not distant far, a length of colonnade  
Invites us: monument of ancient taste,  
Now scorned, but worthy of a better fate.  
Our fathers knew the value of a screen 255  
From sultry suns; and, in their shaded walks  
And long protracted bow'rs, enjoyed at noon  
The gloom and coolness of declining day.  
We bear our shades about us; self-deprived  
Of other screen, the thin umbrella spread, 260  
And range an Indian waste without a tree.  
Thanks to Benevolus<sup>1</sup>—he spares me yet  
These chestnuts ranged in corresponding lines;  
And, though himself so polished, still reprieves  
The obsolete prolixity of shade. 265

Descending now (but cautious, lest too  
fast)

A sudden steep, upon a rustic bridge  
We pass a gulf, in which the willows dip  
Their pendent boughs, stooping as if to drink.  
Hence, ankle-deep in moss and flow'ry  
thyme, 270

We mount again, and feel at ev'ry step  
Our foot half sunk in hillocks green and soft,

Raised by the mole, the miner of the soil.  
He, not unlike the great ones of mankind,  
Disfigures earth; and, plotting in the dark, 275  
Toils much to earn a monumental pile,  
That may record the mischiefs he has done.

The summit gained, behold the proud alcove  
That crowns it! yet not all its pride secures  
The grand retreat from injuries impressed 280  
By rural carvers, who with knives deface  
The pannels, leaving an obscure, rude name,  
In characters uncouth, and spelled amiss.  
So strong the zeal t' immortalize himself 284  
Beats in the breast of man, that e'en a few,  
Few transient years, won from th' abyss  
abhorred

Of blank oblivion, seem a glorious prize,  
And even to a clown. Now roves the eye;  
And, posted on this speculative height, 289  
Exults in its command. The sheepfold here  
Pours out its fleecy tenants o'er the glebe.<sup>2</sup>  
At first, progressive as a stream, they seek  
The middle field; but, scattered by degrees,  
Each to his choice, soon whiten all the land.  
There from the sunburned hay-field homeward  
creeps 295

The loaded wain, while, lightened of its charge,  
The wain that meets it passes swiftly by,  
The boorish driver leaning o'er his team  
Vociferous, and impatient of delay.  
Nor less attractive is the woodland scene, 300  
Diversified with trees of ev'ry growth,  
Alike, yet various. Here the gray smooth  
trunks

Of ash, or lime, or beech, distinctly shine,  
Within the twilight of their distant shades;  
There, lost behind a rising ground, the wood  
Seems sunk, and shortened to its topmost  
boughs. 306

No tree in all the grove but has its charms,  
Though each its hue peculiar; paler some,  
And of a wannish gray; the willow such,  
And poplar, that with silver lines his leaf, 310  
And ash far-stretching his umbrageous arm;  
Of deeper green the elm; and deeper still,  
Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak.  
Some glossy-leaved, and shining in the sun,  
The maple, and the beech of oily nuts 315  
Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve  
Diffusing odors: nor unnoted pass  
The sycamore, capricious in attire,  
Now green, now tawny, and, ere autumn yet  
Have changed the woods, in scarlet honors  
bright. 320

O'er these, but far beyond (a spacious map  
Of hill and valley interposed between),  
The Ouse, dividing the well-watered land,  
Now glitters in the sun, and now retires,  
As bashful, yet impatient to be seen. 325

<sup>1</sup>John Courtney Throckmorton, Esq., of Weston Under-wood (Cowper).

<sup>2</sup>Field.

Hence the declivity is sharp and short,  
 And such the re-ascent; between them weeps  
 A little naiad her improv'rish'd urn  
 All summer long, which winter fills again. 329  
 The folded gates would bar my progress now,  
 But that the lord<sup>1</sup> of this enclosed demesne,  
 Communicative of the good he owns,  
 Admits me to a share; the guiltless eye  
 Commits no wrong, nor wastes what it enjoys.  
 Refreshing change! where now the blazing  
 sun? 335

By swift transition we have lost his glare,  
 And stepped at once into a cooler clime.  
 Ye fallen avenues! once more I mourn  
 Your fate unmerited, once more rejoice  
 That yet a remnant of your race survives. 340  
 How airy and how light the graceful arch,  
 Yet awful as the consecrated roof  
 Re-echoing pious anthems! while beneath  
 The checked earth seems restless as a flood  
 Brushed by the wind. So sportive is the light  
 Shot through the boughs, it dances as they  
 dance, 346  
 Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,  
 And dark'ning and enlight'ning, as the leaves  
 Play wanton, ev'ry moment, ev'ry spot.

And now, with nerves new-braced and  
 spirits cheered, 350  
 We tread the wilderness, whose well-rolled  
 walks,

With curvature of slow and easy sweep—  
 Deception innocent—give ample space  
 To narrow bounds. The grove receives us  
 next;

Between the upright shafts of whose tall  
 elms 355

We may discern the thresher at his task.  
 Thump after thump resounds the constant  
 flail,

That seems to swing uncertain, and yet falls  
 Full on the destined ear. Wide flies the chaff;  
 The rustling straw sends up a frequent  
 mist 360

Of atoms, sparkling in the noon-day beam.  
 Come hither, ye that press your beds of down  
 And sleep not: see him sweating o'er his bread  
 Before he eats it.—'Tis the primal curse,  
 But softened into mercy; made the pledge 365  
 Of cheerful days, and nights without a groan.

By ceaseless action all that is subsists.  
 Constant rotation of th' unwearied wheel  
 That nature rides upon maintains her health,  
 Her beauty, her fertility. She dreads 370  
 An instant's pause, and lives but while she  
 moves.

Its own revolvency upholds the world.  
 Winds from all quarters agitate the air,  
 And fit the limpid element for use,

Else noxious: oceans, rivers, lakes, and  
 streams, 375  
 All feel the fresh'ning impulse, and are  
 cleansed

By restless undulation: e'en the oak  
 Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm:  
 He seems indeed indignant, and to feel  
 Th' impression of the blast with proud disdain,  
 Frowning as if in his unconscious arm 381  
 He held the thunder: but the monarch owes  
 His firm stability to what he scorns—  
 More fixed below, the more disturbed above.  
 The law, by which all creatures else are  
 bound, 385

Binds man the lord of all. Himself derives  
 No mean advantage from a kindred cause,  
 From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease.  
 The sedentary stretch their lazy length 389  
 When custom bids, but no refreshment find,  
 For none they need: the languid eye, the cheek  
 Deserted of its bloom, the flaccid, shrunk,  
 And withered muscle, and the vapid soul,  
 Reproach their owner with that love of rest  
 To which he forfeits e'en the rest he loves. 395  
 Not such th' alert and active. Measure life  
 By its true worth, the comforts it affords,  
 And theirs alone seems worthy of the name.  
 Good health and, its associate in most,  
 Good temper; spirits prompt to undertake, 400  
 And not soon spent, though in an arduous task;  
 The pow'rs of fancy and strong thought are  
 theirs;

E'en age itself seems privileged in them  
 With clear exemption from its own defects.  
 A sparkling eye beneath a wrinkled front 405  
 The vet'ran shows, and, gracing a gray beard  
 With youthful smiles, descends toward the  
 grave  
 Sprightly, and old almost without decay.

Like a coy maiden, ease, when courted most,  
 Farthest retires—an idol, at whose shrine 410  
 Who oft'nest sacrifice are favored least.  
 The love of nature, and the scene she draws,  
 Is nature's dictate. Strange, there should be  
 found,

Who, self-imprisoned in their proud saloons,  
 Renounce the odors of the open field 415  
 For the unscented fictions of the loom;  
 Who, satisfied with only penciled scenes,  
 Prefer to the performance of a God  
 Th' inferior wonders of an artist's hand!  
 Lovely indeed the mimic works of art; 420  
 But nature's works far lovelier. I admire—  
 None more admires—the painter's magic skill,  
 Who shows me that which I shall never see,  
 Conveys a distant country into mine,  
 And throws Italian light on English walls: 425  
 But imitative strokes can do no more  
 Than please the eye—sweet nature ev'ry  
 sense.

<sup>1</sup>Named in the last note but one.



The air salubrious of her lofty hills,  
The cheering fragrance of her dewy vales,  
And music of her woods—no works of man 430  
May rival these; these all bespeak a pow'r  
Peculiar, and exclusively her own.

Beneath the open sky she spreads the feast;  
'Tis free to all—'tis ev'ry day renewed;  
Who scorns it starves deservedly at home. 435  
He does not scorn it, who, imprisoned long  
In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey  
To sallow sickness, which the vapors, dank  
And clammy, of his dark abode have bred,  
Escapes at last to liberty and light: 440

His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue,  
His eye relumines its extinguished fires,  
He walks, he leaps, he runs—is winged with  
joy,

And riots in the sweets of ev'ry breeze.  
He does not scorn it, who has long endured 445  
A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs.

Nor yet the mariner, his blood inflamed  
With acrid salts; his very heart athirst  
To gaze at nature in her green array,  
Upon the ship's tall side he stands, possessed  
With visions prompted by intense desire: 451  
Fair fields appear below, such as he left,  
Far distant, such as he would die to find—  
He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more.

The spleen is seldom felt where Flora<sup>1</sup>  
reigns; 455

The low'ring eye, the petulance, the frown,  
And sullen sadness, that o'ershade, distort,  
And mar the face of beauty, when no cause  
For such immeasurable woe appears,  
These Flora banishes, and gives the fair 460  
Sweet smiles, and bloom less transient than  
her own.

It is the constant revolution, stale  
And tasteless, of the same repeated joys,  
That palls and satiates, and makes languid  
life 464

A peddler's pack, that bows the bearer down.  
Health suffers, and the spirits ebb; the heart  
Recoils from its own choice—at the full feast  
Is famished—finds no music in the song,  
No smartness in the jest; and wonders why.  
Yet thousands still desire to journey on, 470  
Though halt, and weary of the path they  
tread.

The paralytic, who can hold her cards,  
But cannot play them, borrows a friend's  
hand

To deal and shuffle, to divide and sort,  
Her mingled suits and sequences; and sits, 475  
Spectatress both and spectacle, a sad  
And silent cipher, while her proxy plays.  
Others are dragged into the crowded room  
Between supporters; and, once seated, sit,

Through downright inability to rise, 480  
Till the stout bearers lift the corpse again.  
These speak a loud memento. Yet e'en these  
Themselves love life, and cling to it, as he  
That overhangs a torrent to a twig.  
They love it, and yet loathe it; fear to die, 485  
Yet scorn the purposes for which they live.  
Then wherefore not renounce them? No—  
the dread,

The slavish dread of solitude, that breeds  
Reflection and remorse, the fear of shame,  
And their invet'rate habits, all forbid. 490

Whom call we gay? That honor has been  
long

The boast of mere pretenders to the name.  
The innocent are gay—the lark is gay,  
That dries his feathers, saturate with dew,  
Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams  
Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest. 496  
The peasant too, a witness of his song,  
Himself a songster, is as gay as he.

But save me from the gayety of those  
Whose headaches nail them to a noonday bed:  
And save me too from theirs whose haggard  
eyes 501

Flash desperation, and betray their pangs  
For property stripped off by cruel chance;  
From gayety that fills the bones with pain,  
The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with  
woe. 505

The earth was made so various, that the  
mind

Of desultory man, studious of change,  
And pleased with novelty, might be indulged.  
Prospects, however lovely, may be seen  
Till half their beauties fade; the weary sight,  
Too well acquainted with their smiles, slides  
off, 511

Fastidious, seeking less familiar scenes.  
Then snug enclosures in the sheltered vale,  
Where frequent hedges intercept the eye,  
Delight us; happy to renounce awhile, 515  
Not senseless of its charms, what still we love,  
That such short absence may endear it more.  
Then forests, or the savage rock, may please,  
That hides the sea-mew in his hollow clefts  
Above the reach of man: his hoary head, 520  
Conspicuous many a league, the mariner  
Bound homeward, and in hope already there,  
Greets with three cheers exulting. At his  
waist

A girdle of half-withered shrubs he shows,  
And at his feet the baffled billows die. 525  
The common, overgrown with fern, and  
rough

With prickly gorse, that, shapeless and de-  
formed,

And dang'rous to the touch, has yet its bloom,  
And decks itself with ornaments of gold, 529  
Yields no unpleasant ramble; there the turf

<sup>1</sup>Goddess of flowers.

Smells fresh, and, rich in odorif'rous herbs  
And fungous fruits of earth, regales the sense  
With luxury of unexpected sweets.

There often wanders one, whom better days  
Saw better clad, in cloak of satin trimmed 535  
With lace, and hat with splendid riband  
bound.

A serving maid was she, and fell in love  
With one who left her, went to sea, and died.  
Her fancy followed him through foaming  
waves 539

To distant shores; and she would sit and weep  
At what a sailor suffers; fancy, too,  
Delusive most where warmest wishes are,  
Would oft anticipate his glad return, 543  
And dream of transports she was not to know.  
She heard the doleful tidings of his death—  
And never smiled again. And now she roams  
The dreary waste; there spends the livelong  
day,

And there, unless when charity forbids,  
The livelong night. A tattered apron hides,  
Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides, a gown 550  
More tattered still; and both but ill conceal  
A bosom heaved with never-ceasing sighs.  
She begs an idle pin of all she meets,  
And hoards them in her sleeve; but needful  
food,

Though pressed with hunger oft, or comelier  
clothes, 555  
Though pinched with cold, asks never.—Kate  
is crazed.

I see a column of slow-rising smoke  
O'er top the lofty wood that skirts the wild.  
A vagabond and useless tribe there eat  
Their miserable meal. A kettle, slung 560  
Between two poles upon a stick transverse,  
Receives the morsel—flesh obscene of dog,  
Or vermin, or, at best, of cock purloined  
From his accustomed perch. Hard-faring  
race!

They pick their fuel out of ev'ry hedge, 565  
Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves  
unquenched

The spark of life. The sportive wind blows  
wide

Their flutt'ring rags, and shows a tawny skin,  
The vellum of the pedigree they claim. 569  
Great skill have they in palmistry, and more  
To conjure clean away the gold they touch,  
Conveying worthless dross into its place;  
Loud when they beg, dumb only when they  
steal.

Strange, that a creature rational, and cast  
In human mold, should brutalize by choice 575  
His nature; and, though capable of arts  
By which the world might profit, and himself,  
Self-banished from society, prefer  
Such squalid sloth to honorable toil!  
Yet even these, though, feigning sickness oft,

They swathe the forehead, drag the limping  
limb, 581

And vex their flesh with artificial sores,  
Can change their whine into a mirthful note  
When safe occasion offers; and with dance,  
And music of the bladder and the bag, 585  
Beguile their woes, and make the woods re-  
sound.

Such health and gayety of heart enjoy  
The houseless rovers of the sylvan world;  
And, breathing wholesome air and wand'ring  
much,

Need other physic none to heal th' effects 590  
Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold.

Bless'd he, though undistinguished from  
the crowd

By wealth or dignity, who dwells secure,  
Where man, by nature fierce, has laid aside  
His fierceness, having learned, though slow to  
learn, 595

The manners and the arts of civil life.  
His wants, indeed, are many; but supply  
Is obvious, placed within the easy reach  
Of temp'rate wishes and industrious hands.  
Here virtue thrives as in her proper soil; 600  
Not rude and surly, and beset with thorns,  
And terrible to sight, as when she springs  
(If e'er she spring spontaneous) in remote  
And barb'rous climes, where violence pre-  
vails,

And strength is lord of all; but gentle, kind, 605  
By culture tamed, by liberty refreshed,  
And all her fruits by radiant truth matured.  
War and the chase engross the savage whole:  
War followed for revenge, or to supplant  
The envied tenants of some happier spot; 610  
The chase for sustenance, precarious trust!  
His hard condition with severe constraint  
Binds all his faculties, forbids all growth  
Of wisdom, proves a school in which he learns  
Sly circumvention, unrelenting hate, 615  
Mean self-attachment, and scarce aught be-  
side.

Thus fare the shiv'ring natives of the north,  
And thus the rangers of the western world,  
Where it advances far into the deep, 619  
Towards th' antarctic. E'en the favored isles  
So lately found,<sup>1</sup> although the constant sun  
Cheer all their seasons with a grateful smile,  
Can boast but little virtue; and, inert  
Through plenty, lose in morals what they gain  
In manners—victims of luxurious ease. 625  
These therefore I can pity, placed remote  
From all that science traces, art invents,  
Or inspiration teaches; and enclosed  
In boundless oceans, never to be passed  
By navigators uninformed as they, 630  
Or plowed perhaps by British bark again.

<sup>1</sup>The Society and Friendly Islands.

But, far beyond the rest, and with most  
cause,  
Thee, gentle savage!<sup>1</sup> whom no love of thee  
Or thine, but curiosity perhaps,  
Or else vainglory, prompted us to draw 635  
Forth from thy native bow'rs, to show thee  
here  
With what superior skill we can abuse  
The gifts of providence, and squander life.  
The dream is past; and thou hast found again  
Thy cocoas and bananas, palms and yams, 640  
And homestall thatched with leaves. But  
hast thou found  
Their former charms? And, having seen our  
state,  
Our palaces, our ladies, and our pomp  
Of equipage, our gardens, and our sports, 644  
And heard our music; are thy simple friends,  
Thy simple fare, and all thy plain delights  
As dear to thee as once? And have thy joys  
Lost nothing by comparison with ours?  
Rude as thou art (for we returned thee rude  
And ignorant, except of outward show), 650  
I cannot think thee yet so dull of heart  
And spiritless, as never to regret  
Sweets tasted here, and left as soon as known.  
Methinks I see thee straying on the beach,  
And asking of the surge that bathes thy foot  
If ever it has washed our distant shore. 656  
I see thee weep, and thine are honest tears,  
A patriot's for his country: thou art sad  
At thought of her forlorn and abject state,  
From which no pow'r of thine can raise her  
up. 660  
Thus fancy paints thee, and, though apt to  
err,  
Perhaps errs little when she paints thee thus.  
She tells me, too, that duly ev'ry morn  
Thou climb'st the mountain top, with eager  
eye  
Exploring far and wide the wat'ry waste 665  
For sight of ship from England. Ev'ry  
speck  
Seen in the dim horizon turns thee pale  
With conflict of contending hopes and fears.  
But comes at last the dull and dusky eve,  
And sends thee to thy cabin, well-prepared 670  
To dream all night of what the day denied.  
Alas! expect it not. We found no bait  
To tempt us in thy country. Doing good,  
Disinterested good, is not our trade. 674  
We travel far, 'tis true, but not for nought;  
And must be bribed to compass earth again  
By other hopes and richer fruits than yours.

<sup>1</sup>Omai, a native of Otaheite (Friendly Islands), who was brought to England in 1774. He was received by George III, and aroused wide interest in England. Dr. Johnson "was struck with the elegance of his behavior," and Sir Joshua Reynolds painted him. Cowper's guess that he pined for the refinements of England after his return to his native island was correct.

But, though true worth and virtue in the  
mild  
And genial soil of cultivated life  
Thrive most, and may perhaps thrive only  
there, 680  
Yet not in cities oft: in proud and gay  
And gain-devoted cities. Thither flow,  
As to a common and most noisome sew'r,  
The dregs and feculence of ev'ry land.  
In cities foul example on most minds 685  
Begets its likeness. Rank abundance breeds  
In gross and pampered cities sloth and lust,  
And wantonness and gluttonous excess.  
In cities vice is hidden with most ease, 689  
Or seen with least reproach; and virtue, taught  
By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there  
Beyond th' achievement of successful flight.  
I do confess them nurs'ries of the arts,  
In which they flourish most; where, in the  
beams  
Of warm encouragement, and in the eye 695  
Of public note, they reach their perfect size.  
Such London is, by taste and wealth pro-  
claimed  
The fairest capital of all the world,  
By riot and incontinence the worst.  
There, touched by Reynolds, a dull blank be-  
comes 700  
A lucid mirror; in which nature sees  
All her reflected features. Bacon<sup>2</sup> there  
Gives more than female beauty to a stone,  
And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.  
Nor does the chisel occupy alone 705  
The pow'rs of sculpture, but the style as  
much;  
Each province of her art her equal care.  
With nice incision of her guided steel  
She plows a brazen field, and clothes a soil  
So sterile with what charms soe'er she will, 710  
The richest scen'ry and the loveliest forms.  
Where finds philosophy her eagle eye,  
With which she gazes at yon burning disk  
Undazzled, and detects and counts his spots?  
In London. Where her implements exact,  
With which she calculates, computes, and  
scans, 716  
All distance, motion, magnitude, and now  
Measures an atom, and now girds a world?  
In London. Where has commerce such a  
mart,  
So rich, so thronged, so drained, and so sup-  
plied, 720  
As London—opulent, enlarged, and still  
Increasing London? Babylon of old  
Not more the glory of the earth than she,  
A more accomplished world's chief glory now.

<sup>2</sup>John Bacon (1740–1799), a sculptor. Among his works are monuments of Chatham in the Guildhall and in Westminster Abbey. Bacon liked Cowper's first volume of poems and sent him a print of his monument of Chatham.



She has her praise. Now mark a spot or  
two, 725  
That so much beauty would do well to purge;  
And show this queen of cities that so fair  
May yet be foul; so witty, yet not wise.  
It is not seemly, nor of good report, 729  
That she is slack in discipline; more prompt  
T' avenge than to prevent the breach of law:  
That she is rigid in denouncing death  
On petty robbers, and indulges life  
And liberty, and oft-times honor too,  
To peculators of the public gold: 735  
That thieves at home must hang, but he that  
puts

Into his overgorged and bloated purse  
The wealth of Indian provinces escapes.<sup>1</sup>  
Nor is it well, nor can it come to good,  
That, through profane and infidel contempt 740  
Of holy writ, she has presumed t' annul  
And abrogate, as roundly as she may,  
The total ordinance and will of God;  
Advancing fashion to the post of truth,  
And cent'ring all authority in modes 745  
And customs of her own, till sabbath rites  
Have dwindled into unrespected forms,  
And knees and hassocks are well-nigh di-  
vorced.

God made the country, and man made the  
town.

What wonder then that health and virtue,  
gifts 750  
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught  
That life holds out to all, should most abound  
And least be threatened in the fields and  
groves?

Possess ye, therefore, ye who, borne about  
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue 755  
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes  
But such as art contrives, possess ye still  
Your element; there only can ye shine,  
There only minds like yours can do no harm.  
Our groves were planted to console at noon 760  
The pensive wand'rer in their shades. At eve  
The moonbeam, sliding softly in between  
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,  
Birds warbling all the music. We can spare  
The splendor of your lamps; they but eclipse  
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound  
Our more harmonious notes: the thrush de-  
parts 767

Scared, and th' offended nightingale is mute.  
There is a public mischief in your mirth;  
It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,  
Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,  
Has made, which enemies could ne'er have  
done, 772

Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,  
A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

## ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK<sup>2</sup>

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN ANN BODHAM

OH, THAT those lips had language! Life has  
passed

With me but roughly since I heard thee last.  
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smiles I  
see,

The same that oft in childhood solaced me;  
Voice only fails, else, how distinct they say, 5  
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears  
away!"

The meek intelligence of those dear eyes  
(Bless'd be the art that can immortalize,  
The art that baffles time's tyrannic claim  
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.

Faithful remembrancer of one so dear, 11  
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!

Who bidd'st me honor with an artless song,  
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,

I will obey, not willingly alone, 15  
But gladly, as the precept were her own;

And, while that face renews my filial grief,  
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief—  
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,

A momentary dream, that thou art she. 20  
My mother! when I learned that thou wast  
dead,

Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?  
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,

Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?  
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt,<sup>3</sup> a  
kiss; 25

Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—  
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.

I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,  
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,  
And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew 30  
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!

But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art  
gone

Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.

May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,  
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!

Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my con-  
cern, 36

Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.  
What ardently I wished I long believed,

<sup>2</sup>Written in February, 1790; published, without Cowper's knowledge or consent, in a small volume or pamphlet together with *The Dog and the Water Lily* in 1798. Anne Donne Bodham was the daughter of Roger Donne, the brother of Cowper's mother, and the wife of the Rev. Thomas Bodham. Cowper's mother died on 12 November, 1737.

<sup>3</sup>Some editions print "unseen." This is the first of several important variations between the text of 1798 and that of 1808 and later editions. Here and throughout the later readings have been adopted.

<sup>1</sup>A thrust at Clive.

And, disappointed still, was still deceived;  
 By expectation every day beguiled, 40  
 Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.  
 Thus many a sad *to-morrow* came and went.  
 'Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,  
 I learned at last submission to my lot;  
 But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no  
 more, 46  
 Children not thine have trod my nurs'ry floor;  
 And where the gard'ner Robin, day by day,  
 Drew me to school along the public way,  
 Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrap-  
 ped 50

In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,  
 'Tis now become a history little known,  
 That once we called the past'ral house<sup>1</sup> our  
 own.

Short-lived possession! but the record fair 54  
 That mem'ry keeps of all thy kindness there,  
 Still outlives many a storm that has effaced  
 A thousand other themes less deeply traced.  
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,  
 That thou might'st know me safe and warmly  
 laid;

Thy morning bounties ere I left my home, 60  
 The biscuit, or confectionary plum;  
 The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed  
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and  
 glowed;

All this, and more endearing still than all, 64  
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,  
 Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and brakes  
 That humor<sup>2</sup> interposed too often makes;  
 All this still legible in mem'ry's page,  
 And still to be so, to my latest age,  
 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay 70  
 Such honors to thee as my numbers may;  
 Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,  
 Not scorned in heav'n, though little noticed  
 here.

Could time, his flight reversed, restore the  
 hours,  
 When, playing with thy vesture's tissued  
 flow'rs, 75

The violet, the pink, and jessamine,  
 I pricked them into paper with a pin  
 (And thou wast happier than myself the while,  
 Would'st softly speak, and stroke my head  
 and smile), 79

Could those few pleasant days again appear,  
 Might one wish bring them, would I wish  
 them here?

I would not trust my heart—the dear delight  
 Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—  
 But no—what here we call our life is such,  
 So little to be loved, and thou so much, 85

<sup>1</sup>The rectory of Great Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, where Cowper was born.

<sup>2</sup>*i. e.*, caprice.

That I should ill requite thee to constrain  
 Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast  
 (The storms all weathered and the ocean  
 crossed)

Shoots into port at some well-havened isle, 90  
 Where spices breathe and brighter seasons  
 smile,

There sits quiescent on the floods that show  
 Her beauteous form reflected clear below,  
 While airs impregnated with incense play  
 Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;  
 So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached  
 the shore 96

"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"<sup>3</sup>  
 And thy loved consort on the dang'rous tide  
 Of life long since<sup>4</sup> has anchored by thy side.

But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest, 100  
 Always from port withheld, always dis-  
 tressed—

Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-  
 tossed,

Sails ripped, seams op'ning wide, and compass  
 lost,

And day by day some current's thwarting  
 force 104

Sets me more distant from a prosp'rous course.  
 Yet, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he!  
 That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.  
 My boast is not that I deduce my birth  
 From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;<sup>5</sup>  
 But higher far my proud pretensions rise— 110  
 The son of parents passed into the skies.

And now, farewell. Time unrevoked has run  
 His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.  
 By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,  
 I seem t' have lived my childhood o'er again;  
 To have renewed the joys that once were  
 mine, 116

Without the sin of violating thine:

And, while the wings of fancy still are free,  
 And I can view this mimic show of thee,  
 Time has but half succeeded in his theft— 120  
 Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

TO MARY<sup>6</sup>

THE twentieth year is well-nigh past  
 Since first our sky was overcast;  
 Ah, would that this might be the last,  
 My Mary!

<sup>3</sup>Inexactly quoted from Garth's *Dispensary*, III, 226. It should be, "Where billows never break, nor tempests roar."

<sup>4</sup>Cowper's father died in 1756.

<sup>5</sup>Cowper's mother was descended by four different lines from Henry III.

<sup>6</sup>Written in the fall of 1793; the last poem Cowper wrote at Weston. Published in 1803, with the exception of the tenth stanza, which was first printed in 1900. The poem is addressed to Mrs. Unwin, and the reference in the first line is to 1773, when Cowper's engagement to her was broken off because of a return of his madness.





## WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827)

William Blake was born on 28 November, 1757, in London, where his father, James Blake, kept a hosier's shop. He received an elementary education, but the circumstances of his family made it necessary that he should early learn some trade. His father, perceiving that the boy's tastes ran in that direction, sent him at the age of ten to a teacher of drawing. Four years later he apprenticed him to the engraver Basire, with whom Blake remained until he was twenty. Then for a short time he was a member of the antique class of the Royal Academy, after which he set up as an engraver on his own account. The course of Blake's life was outwardly uneventful. In August, 1782, he married Catherine Boucher, the daughter of a Richmond market-gardener. She was entirely uneducated—when she married she could not even read or write—but she proved a true helpmate to Blake, sustaining him with unshaken devotion throughout his life, and enabling him, despite their poverty, to do his own unrewarded work as artist and poet. In 1800 William Hayley was at work on a biography of his friend the poet Cowper, and he invited Blake to engrave the illustrations of this work. Blake accepted the invitation, and he and his wife removed from London to Felpham, and lived in the country near Hayley for several years. Save for this period, however, Blake's life was passed in London, where he worked in obscurity until his death on 12 August, 1827. His small earnings came chiefly from his work as an engraver, though he had a few friends who purchased his drawings and paintings. Among his more notable achievements were his series of designs for Young's *Night Thoughts*, for Blair's *Grave*, for the Book of Job, for Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and the recently discovered designs for Gray's poems. Blake was, however, a poet as well as an artist, and to this fact we owe the existence of a series of books unique in the history of literature. For all of his poems save those in his earliest volume (*Poetical Sketches*, 1783) he himself published—if "publishing" it can be called. He inscribed the text of his poems, together with accompanying decorative designs, upon metal plates, to which he then applied acid which ate away the remaining surface. He thus obtained plates, similar in character to modern stereotype plates, from which he printed in the color which was to form the groundwork of the resulting page, and these pages were then tinted by hand, either by himself or by his wife. Thus Blake literally made his own books, and they were singularly beautiful. The process was, of

course, both slow and expensive, and buyers were few, so that only a few copies of each of his books were made—copies which have become almost priceless. In this way were produced the two series of lyrics on which Blake's reputation as a poet now chiefly rests, *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794), as well as the longer poems, prophetic books, as he called them, in which he more directly expounded his peculiar system of thought in a symbolic language which is so much his own creation as to remain almost unintelligible.

Fortunately one does not need to understand Blake's intricate and obscure symbolism in order to appreciate his shorter lyrics. Yet one should realize that Blake was a confident rebel against all the conventions of organized society. Quiet and blameless as was his outward life, still, in theory he permitted no concessions which might impair complete freedom of thought and action. In the name of freedom he made war alike upon civil law and the rational intellect, believing that the natural impulses of the human heart would lead us to better lives than external compulsion, and that the imagination is a surer guide to truth than reason or common sense. Blake was so confident of the truth of his intuitions that they took on sensible form and appeared to him as visions from the eternal, spiritual world from which, as he believed, we are more or less cut off by earthly life. "I assert, for myself, that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is hindrance and not action. 'What!' it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a round disk of fire somewhat like a guinea?' Oh! no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host crying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!' I question not my corporeal eye any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it." Much of Blake's thought, no doubt, is the fruit, developing in an unusually positive personality, of his early acquaintance with the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg and of ideas imbibed in the days when he was associating, in the rooms of the bookseller Johnson, with Tom Paine and others sympathetic to the French Revolution. Blake became, indeed, the embodiment of practically everything that was contradictory to the spirit of the eighteenth century, and so foreshadowed much that was to be characteristic of the romantic movement. As the champion of the imagination against the reason he exclaimed, "To generalize is to be an idiot. To

particularize is the great distinction of merit." And again he asserted, "Mere enthusiasm is the all in all." It is little wonder that some, like Southey and Crabbe Robinson, thought him mad.

Yet the latter wrote, in his *Reminiscences*: "There is something in the madness of this man which interests me more than the sanity of Lord Byron or Walter Scott!"

### TO WINTER<sup>1</sup>

"O WINTER! bar thine adamantine doors:  
The north is thine; there hast thou built thy  
dark

Deep-founded habitation. Shake not thy  
roofs,

Nor bend thy pillars with thine iron car."

He hears me not, but o'er the yawning deep 5  
Rides heavy; his storms are unchained,  
sheathéd

In ribbéd steel; I dare not lift mine eyes,  
For he hath reared his scepter o'er the world.

Lo! now the direful monster, whose skin clings  
To his strong bones, strides o'er the groaning  
rocks: 10

He withers all in silence, and in his hand  
Unclothes the earth, and freezes up frail life.

He takes his seat upon the cliffs,—the mariner  
Cries in vain. Poor little wretch, that deal'st  
With storms!—till heaven smiles, and the  
monster 15  
Is driv'n yelling to his caves beneath mount  
Hecla.<sup>2</sup>

### SONG

How sweet I roamed from field to field  
And tasted all the summer's pride,  
Till I the Prince of Love beheld  
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He showed me lilies for my hair, 5  
And blushing roses for my brow;  
He led me through his gardens fair  
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,  
And Phoebus fired my vocal rage; 10  
He caught me in his silken net,  
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,  
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me; 15  
Then stretches out my golden wing,  
And mocks my loss of liberty.

### SONG

My SILKS and fine array,  
My smiles and languished air,

<sup>1</sup>This and the four following poems are from *Poetical Sketches*, 1783.

<sup>2</sup>In southwestern Iceland.

By love are driv'n away;  
And mournful lean Despair  
Brings me yew to deck my grave; 5  
Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heav'n  
When springing buds unfold;  
O why to him was't giv'n  
Whose heart is wintry cold? 10  
His breast is love's all-worshiped tomb,  
Where all love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an ax and spade,  
Bring me a winding-sheet;  
When I my grave have made 15  
Let winds and tempests beat:  
Then down I'll lie as cold as clay.  
True love doth pass away!

### MAD SONG

THE wild winds weep,  
And the night is a-cold;  
Come hither, Sleep,  
And my griefs unfold: 5  
But lo! the morning peeps  
Over the eastern steep,  
And the rustling beds of dawn  
The earth do scorn.

Lo! to the vault  
Of pavéd heaven, 10  
With sorrow fraught  
My notes are driven:  
They strike the ear of night,  
Make weep the eyes of day;  
They make mad the roaring winds, 15  
And with tempests play.

Like a fiend in a cloud,  
With howling woe  
After night I do crowd,  
And with night will go; 20  
I turn my back to the east  
From whence comforts have increased;  
For light doth seize my brain  
With frantic pain.

### TO THE MUSES

WHETHER on Ida's shady brow,  
Or in the chambers of the East,  
The chambers of the sun, that now  
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair, 5  
Or the green corners of the earth,  
Or the blue regions of the air  
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,  
Beneath the bosom of the sea 10  
Wand'ring in many a coral grove,  
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry!

How have you left the ancient love  
That bards of old enjoyed in you!  
The languid strings do scarcely move! 15  
The sound is forced, the notes are few!

### SONG FROM AN ISLAND IN THE MOON<sup>1</sup>

HEAR then the pride and knowledge of a sailor!  
His sprit sail, fore sail, main sail, and his  
mizen.  
A poor frail man—God wot! I know none  
frailer,  
I know no greater sinner than John Taylor.

### INTRODUCTION TO SONGS OF INNOCENCE<sup>2</sup>

PIPING down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!" 5  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
"Piper, pipe that song again;"  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer:" 10  
So I sang the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read." 15  
So he vanished from my sight,  
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stained the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear. 20

<sup>1</sup>An *Island in the Moon* is a satirical sketch which Blake never completed. It was written probably in 1784, or shortly thereafter. It was first printed in full by E. J. Ellis in *The Real Blake*, 1907.

<sup>2</sup>This and the five following poems are from *Songs of Innocence*, 1789.

### THE LAMB

LITTLE Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight, 5  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?  
Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee? 10

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:  
He is called by thy name,  
For He calls Himself a Lamb,  
He is meek, and He is mild; 15  
He became a little child.  
I a child, and thou a lamb,  
We are called by His name.  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
Little Lamb, God bless thee! 20

### INFANT JOY

"I HAVE no name:  
I am but two days old."  
What shall I call thee?  
"I happy am,  
Joy is my name." 5  
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty Joy!  
Sweet Joy, but two days old.  
Sweet joy I call thee:  
Thou dost smile, 10  
I sing the while,  
Sweet joy befall thee!

### THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

MY MOTHER bore me in the southern wild,  
And I am black, but O! my soul is white;  
White as an angel is the English child,  
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree, 5  
And, sitting down before the heat of day,  
She took me on her lap and kiss'd me,  
And, pointing to the east, began to say:

"Look on the rising sun,—there God does  
live,  
And gives His light, and gives His heat away;  
And flowers and trees and beasts and men re-  
ceive 11  
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.



"And we are put on earth a little space,  
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;  
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face  
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove. 16

"For when our souls have learned the heat to  
bear,  
The cloud will vanish; we shall hear His voice,  
Saying: 'Come out from the grove, My love  
and care,  
And round My golden tent like lambs re-  
joice.'" 20

Thus did my mother say, and kisséd me;  
And thus I say to little English boy.  
When I from black and he from white cloud  
free,  
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,  
I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear  
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee; 26  
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
And be like him, and he will then love me.

### A CRADLE SONG

SWEET dreams, form a shade  
O'er my lovely infant's head;  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
By happy, silent, moony beams.

Sweet sleep, with soft down 5  
Weave thy brows an infant crown.  
Sweet sleep, Angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles, in the night  
Hover over my delight; 10  
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,  
All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.  
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles, 15  
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,  
All creation slept and smiled;  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,  
While o'er thee thy mother weep. 20

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace.  
Sweet babe, once like thee,  
Thy Maker lay and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all, 25  
When He was an infant small.  
Thou His image ever see,  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee,

Smiles on thee, on me, on all;  
Who became an infant small. 30  
Infant smiles are His own smiles;  
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

### THE DIVINE IMAGE

TO MERCY, Pity, Peace, and Love  
All pray in their distress;  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love 5  
Is God, our Father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity a human face, 10  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine, 15  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;  
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too. 20

### THE FLY<sup>1</sup>

LITTLE Fly,  
Thy summer's play  
My thoughtless hand  
Has brushed away.

Am not I 5  
A fly like thee?  
Or art not thou  
A man like me?

For I dance, 10  
And drink, and sing,  
Till some blind hand  
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life  
And strength and breath,  
And the want 15  
Of thought is death;

Then am I  
A happy fly,  
If I live  
Or if I die. 20

<sup>1</sup>This and the four following poems are from *Songs of Experience*, 1794.

## THE TIGER

TIGER! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies 5  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art, 10  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp 15  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And watered heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee? 20

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

THE CLOD AND THE  
PEBBLE

"Love seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another gives its ease,  
And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair."

So sung a little Clod of Clay, 5  
Trodden with the cattle's feet,  
But a Pebble of the brook  
Warbled out these meters meet:

"Love seeketh only Self to please, 10  
To bind another to its delight,  
Joys in another's loss of ease,  
And builds a Hell in Heaven's despite."

## A LITTLE BOY LOST

"NOUGHT loves another as itself,  
Nor venerates another so,  
Nor is it possible to Thought  
A greater than itself to know:

"And, Father, how can I love you 5  
Or any of my brothers more?"

I love you like the little bird  
That picks up crumbs around the door."

The Priest sat by and heard the child,  
In trembling zeal he seized his hair: 10  
He led him by his little coat,  
And all admired the priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,  
"Lo! what a fiend is here," said he,  
"One who sets reason up for judge 15  
Of our most holy Mystery."

The weeping child could not be heard,  
The weeping parents wept in vain;  
They stripped him to his little shirt,  
And bound him in an iron chain; 20

And burned him in a holy place,  
Where many had been burned before:  
The weeping parents wept in vain.  
Are such things done on Albion's shore?

## INFANT SORROW

MY MOTHER groaned, my father wept,  
Into the dangerous world I leapt;  
Helpless, naked, piping loud,  
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands, 5  
Striving against my swaddling-bands,  
Bound and weary, I thought best  
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

STANZAS FROM *MILTON*<sup>1</sup>

AND did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen? 5

And did the Countenance Divine 5  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire! 10  
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem 15  
In England's green and pleasant land.

<sup>1</sup>*Milton*, one of Blake's "prophetic books," was begun some time between 1800 and 1803, though the plates from which it was printed were not completed until 1808 or 1809.

## ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796)

The parents of Burns both came of yeoman stock. Burns's father began life as a gardener and was later a small farmer, renting his land and toiling hard to wrest from it a bare living for himself and his family. Burns was born in the parish of Alloway, in Ayrshire, on 25 January, 1759, in a small clay cottage which his father had built with his own hands. He was the oldest of seven children, all of whom, as fast as they grew sufficiently to do anything useful, had to share the hard, incessant labors of the farm. His father moved to Mount Oliphant in 1766, and then to a somewhat better farm at Lochlie in 1777, where the family remained until the death of Burns's father in 1784. On these farms Burns grew to manhood, toiling like a galley slave, as he said, and yet managing to get the rudiments of an education and to do—for one in his circumstances at least—much reading. In a letter written in 1787 he says, "Though it cost the school-master some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar; and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age I was a critic in substantives, verbs, and particles. In my infant and boyish days, too, I owe much to an old woman who resided in the family, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, enchanted towers, dragons and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poetry; but had so strong an effect on my imagination that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp lookout in suspicious places. . . . The first two books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read since, were *The Life of Hannibal* and *The History of Sir William Wallace*. . . . What I know of ancient story was gathered from Salmon's and Guthrie's *Geographical Grammars*; and the ideas I had formed of modern manners of literature and criticism I got from the *Spectator*. These, with Pope's works, some plays of Shakespeare, Tull and Dickson *On Agriculture*, the *Pantheon*, Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, Justice's *British Gardener's Directory*, Boyle's *Lectures*, Allan Ramsay's works, Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, *A Select Collection of English Songs*, and Hervey's *Meditations*, had formed the whole of my reading [when sixteen years old].

The collection of songs was my *vade mecum*. I pored over them, driving my cart or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse, carefully noting the true, tender, or sublime from affectation and fustian. I am convinced I owe to this practice much of my critic-craft, such as it is. . . . The addition of two more authors to my library gave me great pleasure: Sterne and Mackenzie—*Tristram Shandy* and *The Man of Feeling*—were my bosom favorites. Poesy was still a darling walk for my mind, but it was only indulged in according to the humor of the hour. I had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand; I took up one or other, as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed the work as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils till they got vent in rime; and then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet."

In 1781 Burns left the farm at Lochlie to try flax-dressing at Irvine. He did not prosper at this, but did learn the bad habits of loose companions he found in the town. He was a man of turbulent passions and weak will, and if his life was a life of song, he tended from this time more and more to unite with song the other two members of the famous triad. One of his friends at Irvine was a certain Richard Brown, who, said Burns, "was the only man I ever saw who was a greater fool than myself when Woman was the presiding star." After the death of their father in 1784 Burns and his brother Gilbert took Mossiel farm, several miles from Lochlie. In the same year, too, Burns met Jean Armour, who later bore him a child, and whom he finally married in 1788. Things going badly on the farm, Burns resolved to emigrate to Jamaica; and it was in order to obtain money for his passage that he published a volume of his poems at Kilmarnock in 1786. The edition was soon sold, and its success led him to remain and bring out a second edition at Edinburgh in the following year. Burns was in Edinburgh through the winters of 1786-1787 and 1787-1788. There also his poems succeeded, netting him a profit of some £500, and attracting much social attention to himself. The latter was at first pleasing to him, but probably did him more harm than good, as he was disappointed in the hope of getting any substantial help from his new acquaintances and soon discovered that he was merely the object of a temporary curiosity. In 1788 he took a farm at Ellisland—chosen, it has been said, rather with a poet's than a farmer's



eye—and settled there with Jean Armour. He found it impossible, however, to make a living from the farm, and in 1789 took a position in the excise. In 1791 he gave up the farm and moved to the near-by town of Dumfries. During these years Burns wrote less and less as he drank more and more. He died, wrecked in both health and reputation by his habits, on 21 July, 1796.

Death came to Burns as a friend. His life was

### MARY MORISON<sup>1</sup>

O MARY, at thy window be,  
It is the wished, the trysted hour!  
Those smiles and glances let me see,  
That make the miser's treasure poor:  
How blithely wad I bide the stoure,<sup>2</sup> 5  
A weary slave frae sun to sun,  
Could I the rich reward secure,  
The lovely Mary Morison.  
Yestreen,<sup>3</sup> when to the trembling string  
The dance gaed<sup>4</sup> thro' the lighted ha',  
To thee my fancy took its wing, 11  
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:  
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,<sup>5</sup>  
And yon the toast of a' the town,  
I sighed, and said amang them a', 15  
"Ye are na Mary Morison."  
O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,  
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?  
Or canst thou break that heart of his,  
Whase only faut is loving thee? 20  
If love for love thou wilt na gie,<sup>6</sup>  
At least be pity to me shown!  
A thought ungentele canna be  
The thought o' Mary Morison.

### EPISTLE TO JOHN LAPRAIK, AN OLD SCOT- TISH BARD<sup>7</sup>

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,  
An' pairtricks sraichin' loud<sup>8</sup> at e'en,  
An' morning poussie whiddin'<sup>9</sup> seen,  
Inspire my Muse,  
This freedom, in an unknown frien', 5  
I pray excuse.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1780 or 1781. From a statement by Gilbert Burns it has been inferred (perhaps wrongly) that the subject of this song was Alison Begbie.

<sup>2</sup>Would I bear the struggle. <sup>3</sup>Last night.

<sup>4</sup>Went. <sup>5</sup>Fine, handsome. <sup>6</sup>Not give.

<sup>7</sup>Written in the spring of 1785. Lapraik (1727-1807) was an Ayrshire poet who, until he lost all his means in 1772, possessed an estate near Muirkirk. Burns addressed two other epistles to him, both also written in 1785. The song referred to in the third stanza is Lapraik's *When I upon thy bosom lean*.

<sup>8</sup>Partridges calling. <sup>9</sup>The hare scudding.

ruined, and his work as a poet was done. As Principal Shairp has said, "At the basis of all his power lay absolute truthfulness, intense reality, truthfulness to the objects which he saw, truthfulness to himself as the seer of them." This the failures of his life did not prevent, and this, doubtless, is the secret of the permanence of his fame. His intensity and his truthfulness have made him for all time one of the greatest of lyric poets.

On Fasten-eeen<sup>10</sup> we had a rockin',<sup>11</sup>  
To ca' the crack<sup>12</sup> and weave our stockin';  
And there was muckle<sup>13</sup> fun and jokin',  
Ye need na doubt; 10  
At length we had a hearty yokin'<sup>14</sup>  
At "sang about."<sup>15</sup>

There was ae<sup>16</sup> sang, amang the rest,  
Aboon<sup>17</sup> them a' it pleased me best,  
That some kind husband had addressed 15  
To some sweet wife:  
It thirled<sup>18</sup> the heart-strings thro' the breast,  
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought described sae weel,  
What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel; 20  
Thought I "Can this be Pope, or Steele,  
Or Beattie's wark?"  
They tauld me 'twas an odd kind chiel<sup>19</sup>  
About Muirkirk.

It pat me fidgin' fain<sup>20</sup> to hear't, 25  
And sae about him there I spiered;<sup>21</sup>  
Then a' that kenned<sup>22</sup> him round declared  
He had ingine,<sup>23</sup>  
That nane excelled it, few cam near't,  
It was sae fine. 30

That, set him to a pint of ale,  
An' either douce<sup>24</sup> or merry tale,  
Or rimes an' sangs he'd made himsel,  
Or witty catches,<sup>25</sup>  
'Tween Inverness and Teviotdale, 35  
He had few matches.

Then up I gat, an' swear an aith,<sup>26</sup>  
Tho' I should pawn my plough and graith,<sup>27</sup>  
Or die a cadger pownie's<sup>28</sup> death,  
At some dyke-back,<sup>29</sup> 40  
A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith  
To hear your crack.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Evening before Lent.

<sup>11</sup>Social meeting.

<sup>12</sup>To have a chat.

<sup>13</sup>Much.

<sup>14</sup>Set-to.

<sup>15</sup>I, e., each in turn sang a song.

<sup>16</sup>One.

<sup>17</sup>Above.

<sup>18</sup>Thrilled.

<sup>19</sup>Chap.

<sup>20</sup>Made me tingle with pleasure.

<sup>21</sup>Asked.

<sup>22</sup>Knew.

<sup>23</sup>Genius.

<sup>24</sup>Sober.

<sup>25</sup>Three-part songs, each sung in turn.

<sup>26</sup>Swore an oath.

<sup>27</sup>Plow and harness.

<sup>28</sup>Peddler's pony's.

<sup>29</sup>Behind a fence.

<sup>30</sup>Talk.

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,  
 Amaist<sup>1</sup> as soon as I could spell,  
 I to the crambo-jingle<sup>2</sup> fell; 45  
     Tho' rude an' rough,  
 Yet crooning to a body's sel,  
     Does weel eneugh.

I am nae poet, in a sense,  
 But just a rimer, like, by chance, 50  
 An' hae to learning nae pretense,  
     Yet what the matter?  
 Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,  
     I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,  
 And say "How can you e'er propose,  
 You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,  
     To mak a sang?" 55  
 But, by your leaves, my learnéd foes,  
     Ye're maybe wrang. 60

What's a' your jargon o' your schools,  
 Your Latin names for horns<sup>3</sup> an' stools;  
 If honest nature made you fools,  
     What sairs<sup>4</sup> your grammars?  
 Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shoos,<sup>5</sup> 65  
     Or knappin'-hammers.<sup>6</sup>

A set o' dull conceited hashesh<sup>7</sup>  
 Confuse their brains in college classes!  
 They gang<sup>8</sup> in stirks,<sup>9</sup> and come out asses,  
     Plain truth to speak; 70  
 An' syne<sup>10</sup> they think to climb Parnassus  
     By dint o' Greek!

Gie me ae spark o' nature's fire,  
 That's a' the learning I desire;  
 Then tho' I drudge thro' dub<sup>11</sup> an' mire 75  
     At plough or cart,  
 My Muse, though hamely in attire,  
     May touch the heart.

O for a spunk<sup>12</sup> o' Allan's<sup>13</sup> glee,  
 Or Fergusson's,<sup>14</sup> the bauld an' slee,<sup>15</sup> 80  
 Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be,  
     If I can hit it!  
 That would be lear<sup>16</sup> eneugh for me,  
     If I could get it.

Now, sir, if ye hae friends enow,  
 Tho' real friends, I b'lieve, are few, 85  
 Yet, if your catalogue be fou,<sup>17</sup>

I'se no<sup>18</sup> insist,  
 But gif ye want ae friend that's true,  
     I'm on your list. 90

I winna blaw<sup>19</sup> about mysel,  
 As ill I like my faults to tell;  
 But friends, an' folks that wish me well,  
     They sometimes roose<sup>20</sup> me;  
 Tho' I maun<sup>21</sup> own, as mony still 95  
     As far abuse me.

There's ae wee faut they whiles<sup>22</sup> lay to me,  
 I like the lasses—Gude<sup>23</sup> forgie me!  
 For mony a plack<sup>24</sup> they wheedle frae<sup>25</sup> me,  
     At dance or fair; 100  
 Maybe some ither thing they gie me  
     They weel can spare.

But Mauchline<sup>26</sup> race, or Mauchline fair,  
 I should be proud to meet you there;  
 We'se gie ae night's discharge to care, 105  
     If we forgather,  
 An' hae a swap<sup>27</sup> o' rimin'-ware  
     Wi' ane anither.

The four-gill chap, we'se gar<sup>28</sup> him clatter,  
 An' kirsen<sup>29</sup> him wi' reekin<sup>30</sup> water; 110  
 Syne we'll sit down an' tak our whitter,<sup>31</sup>  
     To cheer our heart;  
 An' faith, we'se be acquainted better  
     Before we part.

Awa, ye selfish warly<sup>32</sup> race, 115  
 Wha think that havins,<sup>33</sup> sense, an' grace,  
 E'en love an' friendship, should give place  
     To catch the-plack!<sup>34</sup>  
 I dinna<sup>35</sup> like to see your face,  
     Nor hear your crack. 120

But ye whom social pleasure charms,  
 Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms  
 Who hold your being on the terms,  
     "Each aid the others," 125  
 Come to my bowl, come to my arms,  
     My friends, my brothers!

But to conclude my lang epistle,  
 As my auld pen's worn to the gristle;  
 Twa lines frae you wad gar me fiddle,<sup>36</sup>  
     Who am, most fervent, 130  
 While I can either sing, or whistle,  
     Your friend and servant.

<sup>1</sup>Almost.<sup>2</sup>Riming (Crambo is a game in which one has to supply a rime to a word given by another).<sup>3</sup>Ink-horns (?).<sup>4</sup>Serves.<sup>5</sup>Shovels.<sup>6</sup>Hammers for breaking stone.<sup>7</sup>Fools.<sup>8</sup>Go.<sup>9</sup>Young bullocks.<sup>10</sup>Then.<sup>11</sup>Puddle.<sup>12</sup>Spark.<sup>13</sup>Allan Ramsay (1686-1758).<sup>14</sup>Robert Fergusson (1750-1774).<sup>15</sup>The bold and clever.<sup>16</sup>Learning.<sup>17</sup>Full.<sup>18</sup>I'll not.<sup>19</sup>I will not brag.<sup>20</sup>Praise.<sup>21</sup>Must.<sup>22</sup>Sometimes.<sup>23</sup>God.<sup>24</sup>Scotch coin of small value.<sup>25</sup>From.<sup>26</sup>This town is not far from Moss-giel Farm. It is the town where Burns married Jean Armour.<sup>27</sup>An exchange.<sup>28</sup>The four-gill cup, we'll make.<sup>29</sup>Christen.<sup>30</sup>Steaming.<sup>31</sup>Draught.<sup>32</sup>Worldly.<sup>33</sup>Manners.<sup>34</sup>The hunt for coin.<sup>35</sup>Do not.<sup>36</sup>Make me tingle.

TO A LOUSE<sup>1</sup>

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT  
CHURCH

HA! WH'ARE ye gaun, ye crowlin' ferlie!<sup>2</sup>  
Your impudence protects you sairly:<sup>3</sup>  
I canna say but ye strunt<sup>4</sup> rarely,  
Owre gauze and lace;  
Tho' faith! I fear ye dine but sparely 5  
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin', blastit wonner,<sup>5</sup>  
Detested, shunned by saunt an' sinner!  
How dare ye set your fit<sup>6</sup> upon her,  
Sae fine a lady? 10  
Gae somewhere else, and seek your dinner  
On some poor body.

Swith,<sup>7</sup> in some beggar's haffet squattle;<sup>8</sup>  
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle<sup>9</sup>  
Wi'ither kindred jumping cattle, 15  
In shoals and nations;  
Where horn nor bane<sup>10</sup> ne'er dare unsettle  
Your thick plantations.

Now haud<sup>11</sup> ye there, ye're out o' sight,  
Below the fatt'rels,<sup>12</sup> snug an' tight; 20  
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right  
Till ye've got on it,  
The very tapmost tow'ring height  
O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out, 25  
As plump and gray as onie grozet;<sup>13</sup>  
O for some rank mercurial rozet,<sup>14</sup>  
Or fell red smeddum!<sup>15</sup>  
I'd gie you sic a hearty dose o't,  
Wad dress your droddum!<sup>16</sup> 30

I wad na been surprised to spy  
You on an auld wife's flannen toy;<sup>17</sup>  
Or aiblins<sup>18</sup> some bit duddie<sup>19</sup> boy,  
On's wyliecoat,<sup>20</sup>  
But Miss's fine Lunardi<sup>21</sup> fie, 35  
How daur ye do't?

O Jenny, dinna toss your head,  
An' set your beauties a' abroad!<sup>22</sup>  
Ye little ken what curséd speed  
The blastie's makin'<sup>23</sup> 40  
Thae<sup>24</sup> winks and finger-ends, I dread,  
Are notice takin'!

O wad some Pow'r the giftie<sup>25</sup> gie us  
To see oursels as others see us!  
It wad frae mony a blunder free us, 45  
And foolish notion:  
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,  
And e'en devotion!

TO A MOUSE<sup>26</sup>

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE  
PLOW

WEE, sleekit,<sup>27</sup> cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,  
O what a panic's in thy breastie!  
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,  
Wi' bickering brattle!<sup>28</sup>  
I wad be laith<sup>29</sup> to rin an' chase thee 5  
Wi' murd'ring pattle!<sup>30</sup>

I'm truly sorry man's dominion  
Has broken nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion  
Which makes thee startle 10  
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,  
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles,<sup>31</sup> but thou may thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen-icker in a thrave<sup>32</sup> 15  
'S a sma' request:  
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,<sup>33</sup>  
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!  
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'! 20  
An' naething, now, to big<sup>34</sup> a new ane,  
O' foggage green!<sup>35</sup>  
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',  
Baith snell<sup>36</sup> an' keem!

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste, 25  
An' weary winter comin' fast,  
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  
Thou thought to dwell,  
Till crash! the cruel coulter<sup>37</sup> past  
Out-thro' thy cell. 30

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble  
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!  
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,  
But house or hald,<sup>38</sup>  
To thole<sup>39</sup> the winter's sleety dribble, 35  
An' cranreuch<sup>40</sup> cauld!

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1786. <sup>2</sup>Crawling wonder. <sup>3</sup>Greatly.

<sup>4</sup>Strut. <sup>5</sup>Blasted wonder. <sup>6</sup>Foot.

<sup>7</sup>Quick, *i. e.*, "Off with you!" <sup>8</sup>Temples sprawl.

<sup>9</sup>Struggle. <sup>10</sup>Comb nor poison. <sup>11</sup>Hold.

<sup>12</sup>Ribbon-ends. <sup>13</sup>Gooseberry. <sup>14</sup>Rosin.

<sup>15</sup>Powder. <sup>16</sup>Breech. <sup>17</sup>Flannel head-dress.

<sup>18</sup>Maybe. <sup>19</sup>Small ragged. <sup>20</sup>Flannel vest.

<sup>21</sup>Bonnet, named after Lunardi, an aeronaut. <sup>22</sup>Abroad.

<sup>23</sup>The blasted creature is making. <sup>24</sup>Those.

<sup>25</sup>Small gift. <sup>26</sup>Written in November, 1785.

<sup>27</sup>Sleek. <sup>28</sup>Hurrying scamper. <sup>29</sup>Loath.

<sup>30</sup>Plow-spade. <sup>31</sup>Sometimes.

<sup>32</sup>An odd ear in 24 sheaves. <sup>33</sup>With what's left.

<sup>34</sup>Build. <sup>35</sup>Coarse grass. <sup>36</sup>Both bitter.

<sup>37</sup>Cutter on plow to cut the sward.

<sup>38</sup>Without house or abode.

<sup>39</sup>Endure. <sup>40</sup>Hoar-frost.



But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,<sup>1</sup>  
 In proving foresight may be vain:  
 The best laid schemes o' mice an' men  
     Gang aft a-gley,<sup>2</sup>  
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain  
     For promised joy.

40

Still thou art blest compared wi' me!  
 The present only toucheth thee:  
 But oh! I backward cast my e'e  
     On prospects drear!  
 An' forward tho' I canna see,  
     I guess an' fear!

45

### TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY<sup>3</sup>

#### ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOW

WEE modest crimson-tipp'd flow'r,  
 Thou's met me in an evil hour;  
 For I maun crush amang the stoure<sup>4</sup>  
     Thy slender stem:  
 To spare thee now is past my pow'r,  
     Thou bonnie gem.

5

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,  
 The bonnie lark, companion meet,  
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weat  
     Wi' speckled breast,  
 When upward springing, blithe, to greet  
     The purpling east.

10

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north  
 Upon thy early humble birth;  
 Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth  
     Amid the storm,  
 Scarce reared above the parent-earth  
     Thy tender form.

15

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield  
 High shelt'ring woods and wa's<sup>5</sup> maun shield,  
 But thou, beneath the random bield<sup>6</sup>  
     O' clod or stane,  
 Adorns the histie stibble-field,<sup>7</sup>  
     Unseen, alane.

21

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,  
 Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,  
 Thou lifts thy unassuming head  
     In humble guise;  
 But now the share uptears thy bed,  
     And low thou lies!

25

30

Such is the fate of artless maid,  
 Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade,  
 By love's simplicity betrayed,  
     And guileless trust,  
 Till she like thee, all soiled, is laid  
     Low i' the dust.

35

Such is the fate of simple bard,  
 On life's rough ocean luckless starred:  
 Unskillful he to note the card  
     Of prudent lore,  
 Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,  
     And whelm him o'er!

40

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,  
 Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,  
 By human pride or cunning driv'n  
     To mis'ry's brink,  
 Till wrenched of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,  
     He, ruined, sink!

45

E'en thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,  
 That fate is thine—no distant date;  
 Stern Ruin's plowshare drives elate  
     Full on thy bloom,  
 Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight  
     Shall be thy doom!

50

### THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT<sup>8</sup>

MY LOVED, my honored, much respected  
 friend!

No mercenary bard his homage pays:  
 With honest pride I scorn each selfish end,  
 My dearest meed a friend's esteem and  
 praise:

To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,  
 The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;  
 The native feelings strong, the guileless  
 ways;

What Aiken in a cottage would have been—  
 Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier  
 there, I ween.

November chill blows loud wi' angry  
 sigh;<sup>9</sup>

10

The short'ning winter-day is near a close;  
 The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;  
 The black'ning trains o' craws<sup>10</sup> to their  
 repose:

The toil-worn Cotter<sup>11</sup> frae his labor goes,  
 This night his weekly moil is at an end,  
 Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his  
 hoes,

Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,  
 And weary, o'er the moor, his course does  
 hameward bend.

<sup>8</sup>Written in November, 1785, or shortly thereafter. Burns used as a motto for this poem a stanza from Gray's *Elegy* ("Let not Ambition mock their useful toil," etc.), and addressed it to Robert Aiken (1739-1807), an Ayrshire solicitor. Aiken subscribed for 105 copies of the Kilmarnock edition of Burns's poems. The Spenserian stanza Burns borrowed, not from Spenser, whom he had not yet read at this time, but from Beattie, Shenstone, and Thomson.

<sup>9</sup>Wall.

<sup>10</sup>Crows.

<sup>11</sup>Cottager, peasant occupying a small holding.

<sup>1</sup>Not alone. <sup>2</sup>Go often astray.

<sup>3</sup>Written in April, 1786.

<sup>4</sup>Dust.

<sup>5</sup>Walls.

<sup>6</sup>Shelter.

<sup>7</sup>Bare stubble-field.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,  
Beneath the shelter of an agéd tree; 20  
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin', stacher'<sup>1</sup>  
through

To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin'<sup>2</sup> noise  
an' glee.

His wee bit ingle,<sup>3</sup> blinkin bonnillie,<sup>4</sup>  
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wife's  
smile, 24

The lispin infant prattling on his knee,  
Does a' his weary kiaugh<sup>5</sup> and care beguile,  
An' makes him quite forget his labor an' his  
toil.

Belyve,<sup>6</sup> the elder bairns come drapping in,  
At service out, amang the farmers roun';  
Some ca'<sup>7</sup> the plough, some herd, some  
tentie rin<sup>8</sup> 30

A cannie<sup>9</sup> errand to a neibor town.<sup>10</sup>  
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-  
grown,

In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,  
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw<sup>11</sup>  
new gown,

Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,<sup>12</sup> 35  
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship  
be.

With joy unfeigned brothers and sisters  
meet,  
An' each for other's weelfare kindly  
spiers:<sup>13</sup>

The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed  
fleet;  
Each tells the uncos<sup>14</sup> that he sees or  
hears; 40

The parents, partial, eye their hopeful  
years;

Anticipation forward points the view.

The mother, wi' her needle an' her sheers,  
Gars auld claes look amaist<sup>15</sup> as weel's the  
new;

The father mixes a' wi' admonition due. 45

Their master's an' their mistress's command,  
The younkens a' are warnéd to obey;

An' mind their labors wi' an eydent<sup>16</sup> hand,  
An' ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk<sup>17</sup> or  
play: 49

"And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,  
An' mind your duty, duly, morn an' night!  
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,

Implore His counsel and assisting might:  
They never sought in vain that sought the  
Lord aright!" 54

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;  
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,  
Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,  
To do some errands, and convoy her  
hame.

The wily mother sees the conscious flame  
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;  
Wi' heart-struck anxious care, inquires his  
name, 61

While Jenny hafflins<sup>18</sup> is afraid to speak;  
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild  
worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;<sup>19</sup>  
A strappin' youth; he takes the mother's  
eye; 65

Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;  
The father cracks<sup>20</sup> of horses, ploughs, and  
kye.<sup>21</sup>

The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi'  
joy,  
But blate and laithfu',<sup>22</sup> scarce can weel be-  
have;

The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy  
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae  
grave; 71  
Weel-pleased to think her bairn's respected  
like the lave.<sup>23</sup>

O happy love! where love like this is found;  
O heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond com-  
pare!

I've pacéd much this weary mortal round,  
And sage experience bids me this de-  
clare— 76

"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure  
spare,  
One cordial in this melancholy vale,  
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair  
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,  
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the  
evening gale." 81

Is there, in human form, that bears a  
heart—  
A wretch, a villain, lost to love and  
truth—

That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,  
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting  
youth? 85

Curse on his perjured arts, dissembling  
smooth!

Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exiled?  
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,

<sup>1</sup>Totter. <sup>2</sup>Fluttering. <sup>3</sup>Fire-place.

<sup>4</sup>Shining prettily. <sup>5</sup>Worry. <sup>6</sup>Soon. <sup>7</sup>Drive.

<sup>8</sup>Heedful run. <sup>9</sup>Quiet.

<sup>10</sup>Farm-house, with its surrounding buildings.

<sup>11</sup>Fine. <sup>12</sup>Hard-earned wages. <sup>13</sup>Asks.

<sup>14</sup>Strange things. <sup>15</sup>Makes old clothes look almost.

<sup>16</sup>Jilipant. <sup>17</sup>Trifle.

<sup>18</sup>Partly.

<sup>19</sup>In.

<sup>20</sup>Talks.

<sup>21</sup>Cows.

<sup>22</sup>Shy and bashful.

<sup>23</sup>Rest.

Points to the parents fondling o'er their  
child?  
Then paints the ruined maid, and their dis-  
traction wild? 90

But now the supper crowns their simple  
board,  
The halesome parritch,<sup>1</sup> chief of Scotia's  
food:  
The sowpe<sup>2</sup> their only hawkie<sup>3</sup> does afford,  
That 'yont the hallan<sup>4</sup> snugly chows her  
cood;  
The dame brings forth in complimental  
mood, 95  
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck,  
fell;<sup>5</sup>  
And aft he's pressed, and aft he ca's it  
good;  
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell  
How 'twas a towmond<sup>6</sup> auld sin' lint was i'  
the bell.<sup>7</sup> 99

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face  
They round the ingle form a circle wide;  
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,  
The big ha'-Bible,<sup>8</sup> ance his father's  
pride:  
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside, 104  
His lyart haffets<sup>9</sup> wearing thin an' bare;  
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion  
glide—  
He wales<sup>10</sup> a portion with judicious care,  
And "Let us worship God!" he says with  
solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple  
guise;  
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest  
aim: 110  
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild warbling measures  
rise,  
Or plaintive *Martyrs*, worthy of the  
name;  
Or noble *Elgin*<sup>11</sup> beets<sup>12</sup> the heav'nward  
flame,  
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:  
Compared with these, Italian trills are  
tame; 115  
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;  
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,  
How Abram was the friend of God on  
high;  
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage 120  
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;  
Or how the royal bard<sup>13</sup> did groaning lie  
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging  
ire;  
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;  
Or rapt Isaiah's wild seraphic fire; 125  
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,  
How guiltless blood for guilty man was  
shed;  
How He who bore in Heaven the second  
name  
Had not on earth whereon to lay His  
head; 130  
How His first followers and servants sped;  
The precepts sage they wrote to many a  
land:  
How he,<sup>14</sup> who lone in Patmos banishéd,  
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,  
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced  
by Heaven's command. 135

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal  
King  
The saint, the father, and the husband  
prays:  
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant  
wing"<sup>15</sup>  
That thus they all shall meet in future  
days:  
There ever bask in uncreated rays, 140  
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,  
Together hymning their Creator's praise,  
In such society, yet still more dear;  
While circling Time moves round in an eternal  
sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's  
pride, 145  
In all the pomp of method and of art,  
When men display to congregations wide  
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!  
The Power, incensed, the pageant will de-  
sert, 149  
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;  
But haply, in some cottage far apart,  
May hear, well pleased, the language of the  
soul;  
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor en-  
roll.

<sup>1</sup>Wholesome porridge.<sup>2</sup>Milk.<sup>3</sup>Cow.<sup>4</sup>Beyond the wall.<sup>5</sup>Her well-saved cheese, ripe.<sup>6</sup>Twelve-month.<sup>7</sup>Since flax was in flower.<sup>8</sup>Hall-Bible ("So called from its original use in the noble's hall, wherein the whole household assembled for religious services.")—Henley and Henderson).<sup>9</sup>Gray side-locks.<sup>10</sup>Chooses.<sup>11</sup>All sacred melodies.<sup>12</sup>Fans<sup>13</sup>King David.<sup>14</sup>John.<sup>15</sup>Pope, *Windsor Forest*, l. 112, in exactly quoted.



Then homeward all take off their several  
way;

The youngling cottagers retire to rest: 155  
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,  
And proffer up to Heav'n the warm re-  
quest,

That He who stills the raven's clamorous  
nest,

And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,  
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the  
best, 160

For them and for their little ones provide;  
But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine  
preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur  
springs,

That makes her loved at home, revered  
abroad:

Princes and lords are but the breath of  
kings, 165

"An honest man's the noblest work of  
God;"<sup>1</sup>

And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,  
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;

What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous  
load, 169

Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,  
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!

For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is  
sent!

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil  
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet  
content! 175

And O may Heaven their simple lives  
prevent

From luxury's contagion, weak and vile;  
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,

A virtuous populace may rise the while,  
And stand a wall of fire around their much-  
loved isle. 180

O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide  
That streamed thro' Wallace's<sup>2</sup> undaunted  
heart,

Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,  
Or nobly die—the second glorious part,  
(The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art, 185

His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)

O never, never, Scotia's realm desert;  
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,  
In bright succession raise, her ornament and  
guard!

<sup>1</sup>Pope, *Essay on Man*, Epistle IV, l. 248.

<sup>2</sup>William Wallace (1274?–1305), the Scottish national hero. Burns wrote in a letter: "The story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins which will boil along there till the floodgates of life shut in eternal rest."

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL<sup>3</sup>

O THOU! whatever title suit thee,  
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Sootie,<sup>4</sup>  
Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,

Closed under hatches,  
Spairges<sup>5</sup> about the brunstane cootie,<sup>6</sup> 5  
To scaud<sup>7</sup> poor wretches!

Hear me, auld Hangie,<sup>8</sup> for a wee,<sup>9</sup>  
An' let poor damnéd bodies be;  
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,  
E'en to a deil, 10

To skelp<sup>10</sup> an' scaud poor dogs like me,  
An' hear us squeal!

Great is thy pow'r, an' great thy fame:  
Far kenned an' noted is thy name;  
An', tho' yon lowin heugh's<sup>11</sup> thy hame, 15  
Thou travels far;  
An' faith! thou's neither lag<sup>12</sup> nor lame,  
Nor blate nor scaur.<sup>13</sup>

Whyles<sup>14</sup> rangin' like a roarin' lion  
For prey, a' holes an' corners tryin'; 20  
Whyles on the strong-winged tempest flyin',  
Tirlin' the kirks,<sup>15</sup>

Whyles, in the human bosom pryin',  
Unseen thou lurks.

I've heard my reverend grannie say, 25  
In lanely glens ye like to stray;  
Or, where auld ruined castles gray  
Nod to the moon,

Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way,  
Wi' eldritch croon.<sup>16</sup> 30

When twilight did my grannie summon  
To say her pray'rs, douce,<sup>17</sup> honest woman!  
Aft yont<sup>18</sup> the dyke she's heard you bummin',<sup>19</sup>  
Wi' eerie drone;<sup>20</sup>  
Or, rustlin', thro' the boortrees<sup>21</sup> comin', 35  
Wi' heavy groan.

Ae dreary windy winter night  
The stars shot down wi' sklentint<sup>22</sup> light,  
Wi' you mysel I gat a fright  
Ayont the lough;<sup>23</sup> 40  
Ye like a rash-buss<sup>24</sup> stood in sight  
Wi' waving sough.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Written at Mossiel towards the end of 1785. Burns used for a motto ll. 128–9 of *Paradise Lost*, Bk. I:

"O Prince, O Chief of many thronéd Powers  
That led the embattled Seraphim to war."

<sup>4</sup>Little hoof. <sup>5</sup>Splashes. <sup>6</sup>Brimstone tub.

<sup>7</sup>Scauld. <sup>8</sup>Old hangman. <sup>9</sup>For a minute.

<sup>10</sup>Spank. <sup>11</sup>Flaming hollow. <sup>12</sup>Backward.

<sup>13</sup>Nor bashful nor timid. <sup>14</sup>Sometimes.

<sup>15</sup>Uncovering the churches. <sup>16</sup>Hideous groan.

<sup>17</sup>Grave. <sup>18</sup>Beyond. <sup>19</sup>Humming.

<sup>20</sup>With unearthly sound. <sup>21</sup>Elder bushes. <sup>22</sup>Slanting.

<sup>23</sup>Beyond the pond. <sup>24</sup>Bush of rushes. <sup>25</sup>Moan.

The cudgel in my nieve<sup>1</sup> did shake,  
 Each bristled hair stood like a stake,  
 When wi' an eldritch, stoor<sup>2</sup> "quaick, quaick,"  
     Amang the springs, 46  
 Awa ye squattered like a drake  
     On whistlin' wings.

Let warlocks<sup>3</sup> grim, an' withered hags,  
 Tell how wi' you on ragweed nags<sup>4</sup> 50  
 They skim the muirs,<sup>5</sup> an' dizzy crags  
     Wi' wicked speed;  
 And in kirk-yards renew their leagues  
     Owre howkit<sup>6</sup> dead.

Thence country wives, wi' toil an' pain, 55  
 May plunge an' plunge the kirk<sup>7</sup> in vain;  
 For oh! the yellow treasure's taen  
     By witchin' skill;  
 An' dawtit twal-pint Hawkie's gane  
     As yell's the bill.<sup>8</sup> 60

Thence mystic knots mak great abuse  
 On young guidmen,<sup>9</sup> fond, keen, an' crouse,<sup>10</sup>  
 When the best wark-lume<sup>11</sup> i' the house,  
     By cantrip<sup>12</sup> wit,  
 Is instant made no worth a louse, 65  
     Just at the bit.<sup>13</sup>

When thowes<sup>14</sup> dissolve the snawy hoord,  
 An' float the jinglin' icy-boord,<sup>15</sup>  
 Then water-kelpies<sup>16</sup> haunt the foord,  
     By your direction, 70  
 An' 'nighted trav'lers are allured  
     To their destruction.

An' aft your moss-traversing spunkies<sup>17</sup>  
 Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is;  
 The bleezin,<sup>18</sup> curst, mischievous monnies 75  
     Delude his eyes,  
 Till in some miry slough he sunk is,  
     Ne'er mair to rise.

When masons' mystic word an' grip  
 In storms an' tempests raise you up, 80  
 Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,<sup>19</sup>  
     Or, strange to tell!  
 The youngest brither ye wad whip  
     Aff straught to hell.

Lang syne,<sup>20</sup> in Eden's bonnie yard, 85  
 When youthfu' lovers first were paired,  
 And all the soul of love they shared,  
     The raptured hour,  
 Sweet on the fragrant flow'ry swaird,  
     In shady bow'r; 90

Then you, ye auld snick-drawing<sup>21</sup> dog!  
 Ye cam to Paradise incog,  
 An' played on man a curs'd brogue,<sup>22</sup>  
     (Black be you fa'!<sup>23</sup>)  
 An' gied the infant warld a shog,<sup>24</sup> 95  
     'Maist ruined a'.

D'ye mind that day, when in a bizz,<sup>25</sup>  
 Wi' reekit<sup>26</sup> duds, an' reestit gizz,<sup>27</sup>  
 Ye did present your smoutie<sup>28</sup> phiz  
     'Mang better folk, 100  
 An' sklentet<sup>29</sup> on the man of Uz<sup>30</sup>  
     Your spitefu' joke?

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,  
 An' brak him out o' house an' hal',  
 While scabs an' blotches did him gall 105  
     Wi' bitter claw,  
 An' lows'd<sup>31</sup> his ill-tongued wicked scawl,<sup>32</sup>  
     Was warst ava?<sup>33</sup>

But a' your doings to rehearse,  
 Your wily snares an' fechtin'<sup>34</sup> fierce, 110  
 Sin' that day Michael did you pierce,  
     Down to this time,  
 Wad ding a' Lallan tongue, or Erse,<sup>35</sup>  
     In prose or rime.

An' now, auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin', 115  
 A certain Bardie's rantin', drinkin',  
 Some luckless hour will send him linkin'<sup>36</sup>  
     To your black pit;  
 But faith! he'll turn a corner jinkin',<sup>37</sup>  
     An' cheat you yet. 120

But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!  
 O wad ye tak a thought an' men'!  
 Ye aiblins<sup>38</sup> might—I dinna ken—  
     Still hae a stake.<sup>39</sup>  
 I'm wae<sup>40</sup> to think upo' yon den, 125  
     E'en for your sake!

<sup>1</sup>Fist.   <sup>2</sup>With an hideous, harsh.   <sup>3</sup>Wizards.  
<sup>4</sup>Ragwort stems;—the witch's steed, more usually a broom-stick.

<sup>5</sup>Moors.   <sup>6</sup>Over dug-up.   <sup>7</sup>Churn.  
<sup>8</sup>And the petted twelve-pint cow has gone as dry as the bull.  
 (A Scottish pint is rather more than a quart.)

<sup>9</sup>Husbands.   <sup>10</sup>Bold.   <sup>11</sup>Tool.   <sup>12</sup>Magic.  
<sup>13</sup>Just when most needed.   <sup>14</sup>Thaws.   <sup>15</sup>Surface of ice.

<sup>16</sup>Water-spirits, usually in the form of horses.  
<sup>17</sup>Bog-traversing will-o'-the-wisps.   <sup>18</sup>Blazing.

<sup>19</sup>I. e., by being offered as a sacrifice.

<sup>20</sup>Long since.   <sup>21</sup>Intruding.   <sup>22</sup>Trick.  
<sup>23</sup>Lot.   <sup>24</sup>Shock.   <sup>25</sup>Bustling haste.  
<sup>26</sup>Smoky.   <sup>27</sup>Scorched wig.   <sup>28</sup>Smutty.  
<sup>29</sup>Squinted.   <sup>30</sup>Job.   <sup>31</sup>Loosed.   <sup>32</sup>Scold.  
<sup>33</sup>Of all.   <sup>34</sup>Fighting.  
<sup>35</sup>Would surpass a Lowland tongue or Gaelic.  
<sup>36</sup>Hurrying.   <sup>37</sup>Dodging.   <sup>38</sup>Perhaps.  
<sup>39</sup>Have something to gain.   <sup>40</sup>Sad.

A BARD'S EPITAPH<sup>1</sup>

Is THERE a whim-inspired fool,  
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,  
Owre blate<sup>2</sup> to seek, owre proud to snool,<sup>3</sup>

Let him draw near;

And owre this grassy heap sing dool,<sup>4</sup> 5  
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,  
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,  
That weekly this aréa throng,

O, pass not by! 10

But, with a frater-feeling strong,  
Here heave a sigh.

Is there a man whose judgment clear,  
Can others teach the course to steer,  
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,

Wild as the wave; 5

Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,  
Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below  
Was quick to learn and wise to know, 20  
And keenly felt the friendly glow,

And softer flame;

But thoughtless follies laid him low,  
And stained his name!

Reader, attend! whether thy soul 25  
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,  
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,

In low pursuit;

Know prudent cautious self-control

Is wisdom's root. 30

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO  
GUID, OR THE RIGIDLY  
RIGHTEOUS<sup>5</sup>

My son, these maxims make a rule,  
And lump them aye thegither:

The rigid righteous is a fool,

The rigid wise anither:

The cleanest-corn that e'er was dight,<sup>6</sup>

May hae some pyles o' caff in;<sup>7</sup>

So ne'er a fellow-creature slight

For random fits o' daffin.<sup>8</sup>

—SOLOMON (Eccles., vii, 16).

O YE wha are sae guid yoursel,

Sae pious and sae holy,

Ye've nought to do but mark and tell

Your neibor's fauts and folly!

Whase life is like a weel-gaun<sup>9</sup> mill, 5  
Supplied wi' store o' water:  
The heapéd happer's<sup>10</sup> ebbing still,  
And still the clap<sup>11</sup> plays clatter:

Hear me, ye venerable core,<sup>12</sup>

As counsel for poor mortals, 10

That frequent pass douce<sup>13</sup> Wisdom's door

For glaikit<sup>14</sup> Folly's portals;

I, for their thoughtless careless sakes,

Would here propone<sup>15</sup> defenses,—

Their donsie<sup>16</sup> tricks, their black mistakes, 15

Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,

And shudder at the niffer;<sup>17</sup>

But cast a moment's fair regard—

What maks the mighty differ? 20

Discount what scant occasion gave,

\*That purity ye pride in,

And (what's aft mair than a' the lave<sup>18</sup>)

Your better art o' hidin'.

Think, when your castigated pulse 25

Gies now and then a wallop,

What ragings must his veins convulse,

That still eternal gallop!

Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,

Right on ye scud your sea-way; 30

But in the teeth o' baith to sail,

It makes an unco<sup>19</sup> leeway.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,

All joyous and unthanking,

Till, quite transmogrified,<sup>20</sup> they're grown 35

Debauchery and Drinking:

O would they stay to calculate

Th' eternal consequences;

Or—your more dreaded hell to state—

Damnation of expenses! 40

Ye high, exalted, virtuous Dames,

Tied up in godly laces,

Before ye gie poor Frailty names,

Suppose a change o' cases;

A dear loved lad, convenience snug, 45

A treacherous inclination—

But, let me whisper i' your lug,<sup>21</sup>

Ye're aiblins<sup>22</sup> nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother man,

Still gentler sister woman; 50

Tho' they may gang a kennin<sup>23</sup> wrang,

To step aside is human.

<sup>9</sup>Well-going.

<sup>10</sup>Hopper.

<sup>11</sup>Clapper.

<sup>12</sup>Company.

<sup>13</sup>Staid.

<sup>14</sup>Giddy.

<sup>15</sup>Propose.

<sup>16</sup>Restive.

<sup>17</sup>Exchange.

<sup>18</sup>Rest.

<sup>19</sup>Uncommon.

<sup>20</sup>Transformed.

<sup>21</sup>Ear.

<sup>22</sup>Perhaps.

<sup>23</sup>Trifle.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1786.

<sup>2</sup>Modest.

<sup>3</sup>Cringe.

<sup>4</sup>Woe.

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1786.

<sup>6</sup>Winnowed.

<sup>7</sup>Grains of chaff in it.

<sup>8</sup>Larking.



One point must still be greatly dark,  
The moving why they do it;  
And just as lamely can ye mark 55  
How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone  
Decidedly can try us;  
He knows each chord, its various tone, 60  
Each spring, its various bias.  
Then at the balance let's be mute,  
We never can adjust it;  
What's done we partly may compute,  
But know not what's resisted.

### JOHN ANDERSON MY JO<sup>1</sup>

JOHN ANDERSON my jo,<sup>2</sup> John,  
When we were first acquent,  
Your locks were like the raven,  
Your bonnie brow was brent;<sup>3</sup>  
But now your brow is beld,<sup>4</sup> John, 5  
Your locks are like the snow;  
But blessings on your frosty pow,<sup>5</sup>  
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,  
We clamb the hill thegither; 10  
And mony a canty<sup>6</sup> day, John,  
We've had wi' ane anither:  
Now we maun totter down, John,  
And hand in hand we'll go,  
And sleep thegither at the foot, 15  
John Anderson, my jo.

### THE LOVELY LASS OF INVERNESS<sup>7</sup>

THE lovely lass o' Inverness,  
Nae joy nor pleasure can she see;  
For e'en and morn she cries, alas!  
And aye the saut<sup>8</sup> tear blin's her e'e:  
"Drumossie<sup>9</sup> moor, Drumossie day, 5  
A waefu' day it was to me;  
For there I lost my father dear,  
My father dear, and brethren three.  
"Their winding-sheet the bluidy<sup>10</sup> clay,  
Their graves are growing green to see; 10  
And by them lies the dearest lad  
That ever blest a woman's e'e!  
Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,<sup>11</sup>  
A bluidy man I trow<sup>12</sup> thou be;  
For mony a heart thou hast made sair,<sup>13</sup> 15  
That ne'er did wrang<sup>14</sup> to thine or thee.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1788 or 1789.

<sup>2</sup>Sweetheart.

<sup>3</sup>Smooth.

<sup>4</sup>Bald.

<sup>5</sup>Head.

<sup>6</sup>Jolly.

<sup>7</sup>Written in 1794.

<sup>8</sup>Salt.

<sup>9</sup>*I. e.*, Culloden. The poem commemorates the Battle of Culloden, fought on 16 April, 1746.

<sup>10</sup>Bloody.

<sup>11</sup>William of Cumberland.

<sup>12</sup>Believe.

<sup>13</sup>Sore.

<sup>14</sup>Wrong.

### A RED, RED ROSE<sup>15</sup>

MY LOVE is like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June:  
My love is like the melody  
That's sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass, 5  
So deep in love am I:  
And I will love thee still, my dear,  
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,  
And the rocks melt wi' the sun: 10  
And I will love thee still, my dear,  
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only love,  
And fare thee weel awhile!  
And I will come again, my love, 15  
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

### AULD LANG SYNE<sup>16</sup>

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to min'?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And auld lang syne!<sup>17</sup>

#### *Chorus*

For auld lang syne, my dear, 5  
For auld lang syne,  
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,<sup>18</sup>  
And surely I'll be mine; 10  
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet  
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,<sup>19</sup>  
And pu'd<sup>20</sup> the gowans<sup>21</sup> fine;  
But we've wandered mony a weary foot 15  
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidled i' the burn,<sup>22</sup>  
From morning sun till dine,<sup>23</sup>  
But seas between us braid hae roared  
Sin' auld lang syne. 20

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,<sup>24</sup>  
And gie's a hand o' thine;  
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught,<sup>25</sup>  
For auld lang syne.

<sup>15</sup>Written probably in 1794.

<sup>16</sup>Written in 1788.

<sup>17</sup>*I. e.*, old times.

<sup>18</sup>Pay for your three-pint measure.

<sup>19</sup>Hill-sides.

<sup>20</sup>Pulled.

<sup>21</sup>Daisies.

<sup>22</sup>Paddled in the brook.

<sup>23</sup>Dinner-time.

<sup>24</sup>Comrade.

<sup>25</sup>Hearty good-will draught.

TAM GLEN<sup>1</sup>

MY HEART is a breaking, dear Tittie,<sup>2</sup>  
 Some counsel unto me come len',  
 To anger them a' is a pity;  
 But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

I'm thinking, wi' sic a braw<sup>3</sup> fellow,  
 In poortith<sup>4</sup> I might mak a fen';<sup>5</sup>  
 What care I in riches to wallow,  
 If I maunna<sup>6</sup> marry Tam Glen?

There's Lowrie the laird o' Dumeller,  
 "Guid-day to you," brute! he comes ben';<sup>7</sup>  
 He brags and he blaws o' his siller,  
 But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

My minnie<sup>8</sup> does constantly deave<sup>9</sup> me,  
 And bids me beware o' young men;  
 They flatter, she says, to deceive me;  
 But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen?

My daddie says, gin<sup>10</sup> I'll forsake him,  
 He'll gie me guid hunder marks<sup>11</sup> ten;  
 But, if it's ordained I maun take him,  
 O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the Valentines' dealing,<sup>12</sup>  
 My heart to my mou gied a sten';<sup>13</sup>  
 For thrice I drew ane without failing,  
 And thrice it was written, Tam Glen.

The last Halloween I was waukin'  
 My droukit sark-sleeve,<sup>14</sup> as ye ken;  
 His likeness cam up the house stalkin'—  
 And the very gray breeks<sup>15</sup> o' Tam Glen!

Come, counsel, dear Tittie, don't tarry;  
 I'll gie you my bonnie black hen,  
 Gif ye will advise me to marry  
 The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1788 or 1789. <sup>2</sup>Sister. <sup>3</sup>Such a fine.

<sup>4</sup>Poverty. <sup>5</sup>Shift. <sup>6</sup>Must not. <sup>7</sup>In.

<sup>8</sup>Mother. <sup>9</sup>Deafen. <sup>10</sup>If.

<sup>11</sup>Coins worth slightly more than 26 cents each.

<sup>12</sup>The custom was for the men and girls to pair off by drawing slips of paper with names written on them.

<sup>13</sup>To my mouth gave a spring.

<sup>14</sup>Was watching my drenched shirt-sleeve. ("You go out, one or more—for this is a social spell—to a south-running spring, or rivulet, where 'three lairds' lands meet,' and dip your left shirt-sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and, some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question [your future husband], will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it."—Burns's note to *Halloween*, stanza 24, l. 7.)

<sup>15</sup>Breeches.

WILLIE BREWED A PECK  
O' MAUT<sup>16</sup>

O WILLIE brewed a peck o' maut,  
 And Rob and Allan cam to see;  
 Three blither hearts, that lee-lang<sup>17</sup> night,  
 Ye wad na found in Christendie.

## Chorus

We are na fou,<sup>18</sup> we're no that fou,  
 But just a drappie<sup>19</sup> in our e'e;  
 The cock may crawl, the day may daw,  
 And aye we'll taste the barley bree.<sup>20</sup>

Here are we met, three merry boys,  
 Three merry boys, I trow, are we;  
 And mony a night we've merry been,  
 And mony mae we hope to be!

It's the moon, I ken her horn,  
 That's blinkin' in the lift<sup>21</sup> sae hie;  
 She shines sae bright to wyle<sup>22</sup> us hame,  
 But, by my sooth! she'll wait a wee.

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,  
 A cuckold, coward loun<sup>23</sup> is he!  
 Wha first beside his chair shall fa',  
 He is the king among us three!

TO MARY IN HEAVEN<sup>24</sup>

Thou lingering star, with lessening ray,  
 That lov'st to greet the early morn,  
 Again thou usherest in the day  
 My Mary from my soul was torn.

O Mary! dear departed shade!  
 Where is thy place of blissful rest?

<sup>16</sup>Written in 1789. "The air is Masterton's; the song mine. The occasion of it was this:—Mr. Wm. Nicol of the High School, Edinburgh, during the autumn vacation being at Moffat, honest Allan (who was at that time on a visit to Dalswinton) and I went to pay Nicol a visit. We had such a joyous meeting that Mr. Masterton and I agreed, each in our own way, that we should celebrate the business."—Burns's note. Allan Masterton was appointed writing-master in the Edinburgh High School in the fall of 1789.

<sup>17</sup>Live-long. <sup>18</sup>Full. <sup>19</sup>Small drop. <sup>20</sup>Barley-brew.

<sup>21</sup>Sky. <sup>22</sup>Entice. <sup>23</sup>Rogue.

<sup>24</sup>Written in the fall of 1789. Mary Campbell, the subject of this poem, is generally supposed to have died in the fall of 1788, though about her, her relations with Burns, and the time of her death there is some uncertainty. Burns wrote the following note about *My Highland Lassie, O*: "My 'Highland Lassie' was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love. After a pretty long tract of the most ardent reciprocal attachment we met by appointment on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the banks of Ayr, where we spent the day in taking farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands to arrange matters for our projected change of life. At the close of the autumn following she crossed the sea to meet me at Greenock, where she had scarce landed when she was seized with a malignant fever, which hurried my dear girl to the grave in a few days, before I could even hear of her illness."

Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?  
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his  
breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?  
Can I forget the hallowed grove, 10  
Where by the winding Ayr we met,  
To live one day of parting love?  
Eternity will not efface  
Those records dear of transports past;  
Thy image at our last embrace— 15  
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,  
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;  
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar, 19  
Twined amorous round the raptured scene.  
The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,  
The birds sang love on ev'ry spray,  
Till too, too soon, the glowing west  
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes, 25  
And fondly broods with miser care!  
Time but the impression deeper makes,  
As streams their channels deeper wear.  
My Mary, dear departed shade!  
Where is thy place of blissful rest? 30  
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?  
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his  
breast?

### SWEET AFTON<sup>1</sup>

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green  
braes,<sup>2</sup>  
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;  
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,  
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her  
dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds through  
the glen, 5  
Yewild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,  
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming  
forbear,  
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighboring hills,  
Far marked with the courses of clear winding  
rills; 10  
There daily I wander as noon rises high,  
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my  
eye.

<sup>1</sup>Written, probably, early in 1789. There have been attempts to connect Mary Campbell with this poem, but Burns probably had no special person in mind. He stated that the poem was written as a compliment to the "small river Afton that flows into Nith, near New Cummock, which has some charming, wild, romantic scenery on its banks."

<sup>2</sup>Slopes.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys  
below,  
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses  
blossom; 14  
There oft as mild ev'ning weeps over the lea,  
The sweet-scented birk<sup>3</sup> shades my Mary and  
me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it  
glides,  
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;  
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,  
As gathering sweet flow'rets she stems thy  
clear wave. 20

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green  
braes,  
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my  
lays;  
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,  
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her  
dream.

### TAM O' SHANTER<sup>4</sup>

#### A TALE

WHEN chapman billies<sup>5</sup> leave the street,  
And drouthy<sup>6</sup> neighbors neighbors meet,  
As markety-days are wearing late,  
An' folk begin to tak the gate;<sup>7</sup>  
While we sit bousing at the nappy,<sup>8</sup> 5  
An' getting fou and unco<sup>9</sup> happy,  
We think na on the lang Scots miles,<sup>10</sup>  
The mosses, waters, slaps,<sup>11</sup> and styles,  
That lie between us and our hame,  
Where sits our sulky sullen dame, 10  
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,  
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.  
This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,  
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter—

<sup>3</sup>Birch.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1790. Alloway Kirk is less than a mile south of Burns's birthplace. It fell into disuse after the annexation of the parish of Alloway to that of Ayr in 1690, and, when Burns wrote, it had long been ruinous. The old bridge over the Doon, which dates from the fifteenth century, stands about 200 yards to the south of the church. Burns had from his childhood heard with-stories relating to Alloway Kirk, and *Tam o' Shanter* is based on one of them. It is said that Burns probably drew the suggestion of his hero from the character and adventures of Douglas Graham (1739-1811), a farmer noted for his convivial habits, and tenant of the farm of Shanter on the Carrick shore (Henley and Henderson, I, 437). Burns wrote to Mrs. Dunlop in 1791: "I look on *Tam o' Shanter* to be my standard performance in the poetical line. 'Tis true both the one [his new-born son] and the other discover a spice of roguish waggery that might perhaps be as well spared; but then they also show, in my opinion, a force of genius and a finishing polish that I despair of ever excelling."

<sup>5</sup>Peddler fellows.

<sup>6</sup>Thirsty.

<sup>7</sup>Road.

<sup>8</sup>Drinking ale.

<sup>9</sup>Getting full (drunk) and very.

<sup>10</sup>The Scottish mile was about an eighth longer than the English mile.

<sup>11</sup>The bogs, pools, gaps (in fences).



(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses 15  
For honest men and bonnie lasses).

O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise  
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!  
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,<sup>1</sup>  
A bletherin',<sup>2</sup> blusterin', drunken blellum;<sup>3</sup> 20  
That frae November till October,  
Ae market-day thou was na sober;  
That ilka melder<sup>4</sup> wi' the miller  
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;  
That every naig was ca'd<sup>5</sup> a shoe on, 25  
The smith and thee gat roarin' fou on;  
That at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,  
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.  
She prophesied that, late or soon, 29  
Thou would be found deep drowned in Doon;  
Or caught wi' warlocks in the mirk<sup>6</sup>  
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet<sup>7</sup>  
To think how many counsels sweet,  
How many lengthened sage advices, 35  
The husband frae the wife despises!  
But to our tale: Ae market night,  
Tam had got planted unco right,  
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,  
Wi' reaming swats,<sup>8</sup> that drank divinely; 40  
And at his elbow, Souter<sup>9</sup> Johnny,  
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;  
Tam lo'ed him like a very brither;  
They had been fou for weeks thegither.  
The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter, 45  
And aye the ale was growing better:  
The landlady and Tam grew gracious,  
Wi' favors secret, sweet, and precious;  
The souter tauld his queerest stories;  
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus: 50  
The storm without might rair and rustle,  
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,  
E'en drowned himsel amang the nappy.  
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure, 55  
The minutes winged their way wi' pleasure;  
Kings may be bless'd, but Tam was glorious,  
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spread—  
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed; 60  
Or like the snow falls in the river—  
A moment white, then melts for ever;  
Or like the borealis race,  
That flit ere you can point their place;  
Or like the rainbow's lovely form 65  
Evanishing amid the storm.  
Nae man can tether time nor tide;  
The hour approaches Tam maun<sup>10</sup> ride;  
That hour, o' night's black arch the keystone,  
That dreary hour, he mounts his beast in; 70

And sic a night he taks the road in,  
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;  
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast;  
The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed; 75  
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellowed:  
That night, a child might understand,  
The Deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray mare, Meg,  
A better never lifted leg, 80  
Tam skelpit<sup>11</sup> on thro' dub<sup>12</sup> and mire,  
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;  
Whiles<sup>13</sup> holding fast his gude blue bonnet;  
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;<sup>14</sup>  
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares, 85  
Lest bogles<sup>15</sup> catch him unawares.  
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,  
Whare ghaists and houlets<sup>16</sup> nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,  
Where in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;<sup>17</sup> 90  
And past the birks and meikle stane,<sup>18</sup>  
Where drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;  
And thro' the whins,<sup>19</sup> and by the cairn,<sup>20</sup>  
Where hunters fand the murdered bairn;<sup>21</sup>  
And near the thorn, aboon<sup>22</sup> the well, 95  
Where Mungo's mither hanged hersel.  
Before him Doon pours all his floods;  
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;  
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;  
Near and more near the thunders roll: 100  
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,  
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;  
Thro' ilka bore<sup>23</sup> the beams were glancing;  
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn! 105  
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!  
Wi' tippenny,<sup>24</sup> we fear nae evil;  
Wi' usquebae,<sup>25</sup> we'll face the devil!  
The swats sae reamed in Tammie's noddle,  
Fair play, he cared na deils a boddle!<sup>26</sup> 110  
But Maggie stood right sair astonished,  
Till, by the heel and hand admonished,  
She ventured forward on the light;  
And, vow! Tam saw an unco<sup>27</sup> sight!

Warlocks and witches in a dance! 115  
Nae cotillon brent new<sup>28</sup> frae France,  
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,<sup>29</sup>  
Put life and mettle in their heels.  
A winnock-bunker<sup>30</sup> in the east,  
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast— 120  
A touzie tyke,<sup>31</sup> black, grim, and large!  
To gie them music was his charge:  
He screwed the pipes and gart them skirl,<sup>32</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Good-for-nothing. <sup>2</sup>Chattering. <sup>3</sup>Babbler.

<sup>4</sup>Every meal-grinding.

<sup>5</sup>Driven.

<sup>6</sup>Wizards in the dark.

<sup>7</sup>Makes me weep.

<sup>8</sup>Foaming new ale.

<sup>9</sup>Shoemaker.

<sup>10</sup>Must.

<sup>11</sup>Clattered.

<sup>12</sup>Puddle.

<sup>13</sup>Now.

<sup>14</sup>Song.

<sup>15</sup>Bogies.

<sup>16</sup>Ghosts and owls.

<sup>17</sup>Peddler smothered.

<sup>18</sup>Birches and big stone.

<sup>19</sup>Furze.

<sup>20</sup>Pile of stones.

<sup>21</sup>Child.

<sup>22</sup>Above.

<sup>23</sup>Every chink.

<sup>24</sup>Ale.

<sup>25</sup>Whisky.

<sup>26</sup>Copper.

<sup>27</sup>Wonderful.

<sup>28</sup>Brand-new.

<sup>29</sup>Names of Scottish dances.

<sup>30</sup>Window-seat.

<sup>31</sup>Shaggy dog.

<sup>32</sup>Made them squeal

Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.<sup>1</sup>  
 Coffins stood round like open presses, 125  
 That shawed the dead in their last dresses;  
 And by some devilish cantraip<sup>2</sup> sleight  
 Each in its cauld hand held a light,  
 By which heroic Tam was able  
 To note upon the haly<sup>3</sup> table 130  
 A murderer's banes in gibbet-airns;<sup>4</sup>  
 Twa span-lang, wee, unchristened bairns;  
 A thief new-cutted frae the rape,<sup>5</sup>  
 Wi' his last gasp his gab<sup>6</sup> did gape;  
 Five tomahawks, wi' blude red rusted; 135  
 Five scymitars, wi' murder crusted;  
 A garter, which a babe had strangled;  
 A knife, a father's throat had mangled,  
 Whom his ain son o' life bereft—  
 The gray hairs yet stack to the heft; 140  
 Wi' mair of horrible and awfu',  
 Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowred,<sup>7</sup> amazed, and curious,  
 The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:  
 The piper loud and louder blew; 145  
 The dancers quick and quicker flew;  
 They reeled, they set, they crossed, they  
 cleekit,<sup>8</sup>

Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,<sup>9</sup>  
 And coost her duddies to the wark,<sup>10</sup>  
 And linkit at it in her sark!<sup>11</sup> 150

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,<sup>12</sup>  
 A' plump and strapping in their teens;  
 Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,<sup>13</sup>  
 Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen!<sup>14</sup>  
 Thir breeks<sup>15</sup> o' mine, my only pair, 155  
 That ance were plush, o' gude blue hair,  
 I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,<sup>16</sup>  
 For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies!<sup>17</sup>

But withered beldams, auld and droll,  
 Rigwoodie<sup>18</sup> hags wad spean<sup>19</sup> a foal, 160  
 Louping and flinging on a crummock,<sup>20</sup>  
 I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But Tam kent<sup>21</sup> what was what fu' braw-  
 lie:<sup>22</sup>

There was ae winsome wench and walie<sup>23</sup>  
 That night enlisted in the core,<sup>24</sup> 165  
 Lang after kent on Carrick shore!  
 (For mony a beast to dead she shot,  
 And perished mony a bonnie boat,  
 And shook baith meikle corn and bear,<sup>25</sup>

And kept the country-side in fear.) 170  
 Her cutty<sup>26</sup> sark, o' Paisley harn,<sup>27</sup>  
 That while a lassie she had worn,  
 In longitude tho' sorely scanty,  
 It was her best, and she was vauntie.<sup>28</sup>  
 Ah! little kent thy reverend grannie 175  
 That sark she coft<sup>29</sup> for her wee Nannie  
 Wi' twa pund Scots<sup>30</sup> ('twas a' her riches)  
 Wad ever graced a dance of witches!

But here my muse her wing maun cour;<sup>31</sup>  
 Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r— 180  
 To sing how Nannie lap and flang<sup>32</sup>  
 (A souple jade she was, and strang);  
 And how Tam stood, like ane bewitched,  
 And thought his very e'en enriched;  
 Even Satan glowed, and fidget<sup>33</sup> fu' fain, 185  
 And hotched<sup>34</sup> and blew wi' might and main:  
 Till first ae caper, syne anither,  
 Tam tint<sup>35</sup> his reason a' thegither,  
 And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"  
 And in an instant all was dark! 190  
 And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,  
 When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke<sup>36</sup>  
 When plundering herds<sup>37</sup> assail their byke,<sup>38</sup>  
 As open pussie's mortal foes<sup>39</sup> 195  
 When, pop! she starts before their nose,  
 As eager runs the market-crowd,  
 When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud,  
 So Maggie runs; the witches follow,  
 Wi' mony an eldritch skriech<sup>40</sup> and hollow. 200

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin'<sup>41</sup>!  
 In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'!  
 In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin'!  
 Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!  
 Now do thy speedy utmost, Meg, 205  
 And win the key-stane o' the brig:<sup>42</sup>  
 There at them thou thy tail may toss,  
 A running stream they darena cross.  
 But ere the key-stane she could make,  
 The fient<sup>43</sup> a tail she had to shake! ~ 210  
 For Nannie, far before the rest,  
 Hard upon noble Maggie pressed,  
 And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;<sup>44</sup>  
 But little wist<sup>45</sup> she Maggie's mettle!  
 Ae spring brought off her master hale, 215  
 But left behind her ain gray tail:  
 The carlin claught<sup>46</sup> her by the rump,  
 And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

<sup>1</sup>Ring. <sup>2</sup>Magic. <sup>3</sup>Holy.

<sup>4</sup>Bones in gibbet-irons. <sup>5</sup>Rope. <sup>6</sup>Mouth.

<sup>7</sup>Stared.

<sup>8</sup>Linked themselves.

<sup>9</sup>Till every old woman sweat and steamed.

<sup>10</sup>And cast off her clothes to the work.

<sup>11</sup>And tripped at it in her shirt.

<sup>12</sup>Had these been young women. <sup>13</sup>Greasy flannel.

<sup>14</sup>I. e., fine linen, with 1700 threads to a width.

<sup>15</sup>These breeches. <sup>16</sup>Hips. <sup>17</sup>Maidens.

<sup>18</sup>Probably ancient, or lean. <sup>19</sup>Wean (from disgust).

<sup>20</sup>Leaping and kicking on a staff. <sup>21</sup>Knew.

<sup>22</sup>Full well. <sup>23</sup>Choice. <sup>24</sup>Company.

<sup>25</sup>Much wheat and barley.

<sup>26</sup>Short. <sup>27</sup>Coarse linen. <sup>28</sup>Proud. <sup>29</sup>Bought.

<sup>30</sup>A pund Scots was only about 40 cents.

<sup>31</sup>Must stoop. <sup>32</sup>Leaped and kicked. <sup>33</sup>Fidgeted.

<sup>34</sup>Jerked. <sup>35</sup>Lost. <sup>36</sup>Fret. <sup>37</sup>Herders of cattle.

<sup>38</sup>Hive. <sup>39</sup>As the hare's mortal foes begin to bark.

<sup>40</sup>Unearthly screech.

<sup>41</sup>Literally, a present from a fair, but the word came to be used ironically (as it is here) for a beating.

<sup>42</sup>Bridge. "It is a well-known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream."—Burns's note.

<sup>43</sup>Devil. <sup>44</sup>Aim. <sup>45</sup>Knew. <sup>46</sup>Seized.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,  
Each man and mother's son, take heed; 220  
Whene'er to drink you are inclined,  
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,  
Think! ye may buy the joys o'er dear;  
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

### YE FLOWERY BANKS O' BONNIE DOON<sup>1</sup>

YE FLOWERY banks o' bonnie Doon,  
How can ye blume sae fair?  
How can ye chant, ye little birds,  
And I sae fu' o' care?

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird, 5  
That sings upon the bough;  
Thou minds me o' the happy days,  
When my fause luvie was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird, 10  
That sings beside thy mate;  
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,  
And wist<sup>2</sup> na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,  
'To see the woodbine twine,  
And ilka<sup>3</sup> bird sang o' its love, 15  
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose  
Frae off its thorny tree:  
And my fause luvie staw<sup>4</sup> my rose, 20  
But left the thorn wi' me.

### AE FOND KISS<sup>5</sup>

AE FOND kiss, and then we sever!  
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!  
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,  
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage<sup>6</sup> thee. 5  
Who shall say that fortune grieves him  
While the star of hope she leaves him?  
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,  
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,  
Naething could resist my Nancy;  
But to see her was to love her,  
Love but her, and love for ever.  
Had we never loved sae kindly, 10  
Had we never loved sae blindly,  
Never met—or never parted—  
We had ne'er been broken-hearted. 15

<sup>1</sup>Written probably in 1791.

<sup>2</sup>Knew.

<sup>3</sup>Every.

<sup>4</sup>Stole.

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1791.

<sup>6</sup>Pledge.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!  
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!  
Thine be ilka<sup>7</sup> joy and treasure,  
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure. 20  
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;  
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!  
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,  
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

### DUNCAN GRAY<sup>8</sup>

DUNCAN GRAY came here to woo,  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't,  
On blithe Yule night<sup>9</sup> when we were fou,<sup>10</sup>  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
Maggie coost<sup>11</sup> her head fu' heigh, 5  
Looked asklent and unco skeigh,<sup>12</sup>  
Gart<sup>13</sup> poor Duncan stand abeigh,<sup>14</sup>  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan fleeced,<sup>15</sup> and Duncan prayed;  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't, 10  
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,<sup>16</sup>  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
Duncan sighed baith out and in,  
Grat<sup>17</sup> his e'en baith bleer't and blin',  
Spak o' lowpin o'er a linn,<sup>18</sup> 15  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Time and chance are but a tide,  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't,  
Slighted love is sair to bide,<sup>19</sup>  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't. 20  
Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,  
For a haughty hizzie<sup>20</sup> die?  
She may gae to—France for me!  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

How it comes let doctors tell, 25  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't,  
Meg grew sick as he grew hale,  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
Something in her bosom wrings;  
For relief a sigh she brings; 30  
And O, her e'en they spak sic<sup>21</sup> things!  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan was a lad o' grace,  
Ha, ha, the wooing o't,

<sup>7</sup>Every.

<sup>8</sup>Written in 1792. The second or (as Henley and Henderson say) drawing-room set. Of the tune Burns wrote: "*Duncan Gray* is that kind of lighthorse gallop of an air which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature."

<sup>9</sup>Christmas Eve.

<sup>10</sup>Drunk.

<sup>11</sup>Cast.

<sup>12</sup>Askance and very disdainful.

<sup>13</sup>Made.

<sup>14</sup>Off.

<sup>15</sup>Wheeled.

<sup>16</sup>A rocky islet in the Firth of Clyde, frequented by screaming sea-fowl.

<sup>17</sup>Wept.

<sup>18</sup>Leaping over a waterfall.

<sup>19</sup>Hard to endure.

<sup>20</sup>Young woman.

<sup>21</sup>Such.



Maggie's was a piteous case, 35  
     Ha, ha, the wooing o't.  
 Duncan couldna be her death,  
 Swelling pity smoor'd<sup>1</sup> his wrath;  
 Now they're crouse and cantie<sup>2</sup> baith!  
     Ha, ha, the wooing o't. 40

### HIGHLAND MARY<sup>3</sup>

YE BANKS and braes<sup>4</sup> and streams around  
     The castle o' Montgomery,  
 Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,  
     Your waters never drumlie!<sup>5</sup>  
 There summer first unfauld<sup>6</sup> her robes, 5  
     And there the longest tarry;  
 For there I took the last fareweel  
     O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,<sup>7</sup>  
     How rich the hawthorn's blossom, 10  
 As underneath their fragrant shade  
     I clasped her to my bosom!  
 The golden hours on angel wings  
     Flew o'er me and my dearie;  
 For dear to me as light and life 15  
     Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow, and locked embrace,  
     Our parting was fu' tender;  
 And, pledging aft to meet again,  
     We tore ourselves asunder; 20  
 But oh! fell death's untimely frost,  
     That nipped my flower sae early!  
 Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,  
     That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips, 25  
     I aft have kissed sae fondly!  
 And closed for aye the sparkling glance,  
     That dwelt on me sae kindly!  
 And mold'ring now in silent dust,  
     That heart that lo'ed me dearly! 30  
 But still within my bosom's core  
     Shall live my Highland Mary.

### SCOTS WHA HAE<sup>8</sup>

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,  
 Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,  
 Welcome to your gory bed,  
     Or to victorie.

<sup>1</sup>Smothered.      <sup>2</sup>Brisk and cheerful.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1792. Concerning Mary Campbell, the subject of this song, see *To Mary in Heaven*, note 1, above.

<sup>4</sup>Slopes.      <sup>5</sup>Turbid.      <sup>6</sup>Unfold.      <sup>7</sup>Birch.

<sup>8</sup>Written in 1793. There was a tradition that the air *Hey Tatti Tatti* was Robert Bruce's march at Bannockburn. Burns wrote: "This thought, in my solitary wanderings, roused me to a pitch of enthusiasm on the theme of liberty and independence, which I threw into a kind of Scottish ode,

Now's the day, and now's the hour; 3  
 See the front o' battle lour!  
 See approach proud Edward's power—  
     Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?  
 Wha can fill a coward's grave? 10  
 Wha sae base as be a slave?  
     Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law  
 Freedom's sword will strongly draw,  
 Freeman stand, or freeman fa'? 15  
     Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!  
 By your sons in servile chains!  
 We will drain our dearest veins,  
     But they shall be free! 20

Lay the proud usurpers low!  
 Tyrants fall in every foe!  
 Liberty's in every blow!  
     Let us do or die!

### IS THERE FOR HONEST POVERTY<sup>9</sup>

IS THERE, for honest poverty,  
     That hangs his head, and a' that?  
 The coward-slave, we pass him by,  
     We dare be poor for a' that!  
     For a' that, and a' that, 5  
     Our toils obscure, and a' that,  
 The rank is but the guinea stamp;  
     The man's the gowd!<sup>10</sup> for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,  
     Wear hodden-gray,<sup>11</sup> and a' that? 10  
 Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,  
     A man's a man for a' that.  
     For a' that, and a' that,  
     Their tinsel show, and a' that,  
 The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor, 15  
     Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie,<sup>12</sup> ca'd a lord,  
     Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;  
 Tho' hundreds worshipping at his word,  
     He's but a coof!<sup>13</sup> for a' that: 20

fitted to the air, that one might suppose to be the gallant royal Scot's address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning." The Battle of Bannockburn was fought on 24 June, 1314. The Scots under Bruce won a victory over Edward II and the English which secured the independence of Scotland until the union of the kingdoms in 1603. In the same letter from which the above sentence is quoted Burns also indicated that the French Revolution was in his mind when he was writing the poem.

<sup>9</sup>Written in 1793 or 1794.

<sup>10</sup>Gold.

<sup>11</sup>Coarse gray woolen cloth.

<sup>12</sup>Fellow.

<sup>13</sup>Fool.

For a' that, and a' that,  
 His ribband, star, and a' that,  
 The man of independent mind,  
 He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight, 25  
 A marquis, duke, and a' that;  
 But an honest man's aboon<sup>1</sup> his might,  
 Guid faith he mauna fa'<sup>2</sup> that!  
 For a' that, and a' that,  
 Their dignities, and a' that, 30  
 The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,  
 Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,  
 As come it will for a' that,  
 That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth, 35  
 Shall bear the gree<sup>3</sup> and a' that;  
 For a' that, and a' that,  
 It's comin' yet for a' that,  
 That man to man, the world o'er,  
 Shall brithers be for a' that. 40

<sup>1</sup>Above.      <sup>2</sup>Must not lay claim to.

<sup>3</sup>Have the prize.

## O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST<sup>4</sup>

O, WERT thou in the cauld blast  
 On yonder lea, on yonder lea,  
 My plaidie to the angry airt,<sup>5</sup>  
 I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee. 5  
 Or did misfortune's bitter storms  
 Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,  
 Thy bield<sup>6</sup> should be my bosom,  
 To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,  
 Sae black and bare, sae black and bare, 10  
 The desert were a paradise,  
 If thou wert there, if thou wert there.  
 Or were I monarch o' the globe,  
 Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,  
 The brightest jewel in my crown 15  
 Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1796, during Burns's last illness, in honor of Jessie Lewars, who did much for him and his family at that time.

<sup>5</sup>Quarter.      <sup>6</sup>Shelter.

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth in the county of Cumberland on 7 April, 1770. His early life was one of simplicity, almost of poverty, amid picturesque rural surroundings. His mother died when he was eight years old, and his father five years later. He attended the grammar school of Hawkshead, living as a boarder in the village, and thence passed in 1787 to St. John's College, Cambridge, two of his uncles providing the means necessary for his university education. He took his B. A. in 1791. Wordsworth was never a great reader, and he did not distinguish himself as a student. There may even have been a degree of wildness in his life during these years which it is still not usual to associate with the "Daddy Wordsworth"—to use Edward Fitz-Gerald's phrase—perpetuated by the poet's earlier biographers. It is evident at any rate that, as he himself later said, he "was not for that hour, nor for that place," and that, while his strictly intellectual training was pursued somewhat listlessly at Cambridge, his heart was roused to fresh life in his vacations spent in the northern country known as the lake district and, in the summer of 1790, in a walking tour through France, Switzerland, and northern Italy. After he left Cambridge he spent some months in London and then went to France, where he remained until the beginning of 1793. While he was in France he was in close association with members of the revolutionary party, and at the same time he fell in love with a member of a royalist family, Marie-Anne Vallon, some four or five years his senior, who bore him a daughter in December, 1792. There is reason for believing that Wordsworth later intended to marry the mother of his daughter, but he did not do so. On the other hand, as Professor G. M. Harper has said, "whatever, from a legal point of view, may have been the nature of the connection between Wordsworth and Marie-Anne Vallon, it was openly acknowledged and its consequences were honorably endured" (*Wordsworth's French Daughter*, p. 12).

Soon after his return to England in 1793 he published *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*, and presently he became, at least partly by way of reaction from the excesses of the French Revolution, a disciple of William Godwin, a crank who for a short time was seriously regarded as the leader of English liberalism. "Throw aside your books of chemistry," said Wordsworth to a young student, "and read Godwin upon Necessity." Godwin was a necessitarian and an ex-

treme individualist who believed that our faults are induced in us by our environment, and that the doing away with all external compulsions—i.e., with all contracts between individuals and with government itself—would make possible an earthly paradise in which the sole ruler would be the reason of the individual. His *Political Justice* was published in 1793 and his influence over Wordsworth extended until 1797, when it was replaced by that of Coleridge, whom he had met in 1795. In 1797 Wordsworth went to live near Coleridge in Somersetshire. Coleridge was, as has been finely said, "one of those minds which startle other minds out of the *ordinariness* which so easily besets most men, and besets at fitful intervals even genius" (H. W. Garrod, *Wordsworth*, p. 139). It was at the very beginning of Wordsworth's intimacy with Coleridge that he wrung himself free of "that strong disease," as he calls it, of Godwinism, and it was during the years of his close association with Coleridge—that is to say, for about nine years following 1797—that he wrote practically all of his greatest poetry. In 1798 he and Coleridge published *Lyrical Ballads* (the volume contained four poems by Coleridge). In 1798 and 1799 a large part of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth's long autobiographical poem, was written, and it was finished in 1805. In this period the fragment of *The Recluse* was written (1800) and part of *The Excursion*, including the episode concerning Margaret (1799). And at the end of this period was published *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807). This sums up the best of Wordsworth's poetry, and after 1807 he began to settle more and more deeply into that *ordinariness* to which he was, perhaps, naturally more prone than other men of equally great gifts.

Meanwhile Wordsworth had been living with his sister Dorothy, who also exerted a strong influence upon him, since 1795, when he had received a small legacy from Raisley Calvert which had freed him from dependence on his other relatives. In 1798 Wordsworth and Dorothy and Coleridge had gone to spend some time in Germany; and in 1799 the Wordsworths took Dove Cottage, Grasmere, where they remained nine years. In 1802 Wordsworth married Mary Hutchinson. In 1813 he was given a government post, a sinecure, which greatly increased his income and enabled him to move to Rydal Mount, where he remained until his death. In the following year he published *The Excursion*, and in 1815 *The White Doe of Rylstone*, *Laodamia*, and other poems. In



1836-1837 a collected edition of his poems was published, in six volumes. In 1843 he was made poet laureate, in succession to Southey. He died on 23 April, 1850.

In the note concerning his *Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*, which Wordsworth dictated to Miss Isabella Fenwick, he spoke of a difficulty he had had in childhood in admitting "the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being." This arose, he went on to say, "from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me," and from this it came about that "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character. . . . To that dream-like vividness and splendor which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony." It is hardly too much to say that this passage contains the key to Wordsworth's poetry. In his youth Wordsworth's animal sensibilities were strong. The life of the eye and ear was more to him than to other men. And while his richest and most vivid experiences came to him through the senses, at the

same time they often carried him beyond sense to visions of an eternity not beyond the reach of man. From this Wordsworth inferred the natural goodness of the senses, and thus he was prepared for the influence of Rousseau and the French Revolution. To this faith in the life of the senses he returned after his period of subjection to Godwin, and in this faith much of his great poetry was written. In his great period he also attacked, with Coleridge's help, the question how one was to maintain one's spiritual life as one grew older and the impressions of the senses became less piercingly vivid. To this question he found answers—we may read them in *The Character of the Happy Warrior* and the *Ode to Duty*—but evidently no answer that enabled him to maintain his own life on the exalted level of his great decade.

The *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798 mark, as is usually said, a new epoch in the history of English literature;—they definitely usher in the romantic movement. Among other things it is notable that these poems are largely concerned with the experiences of humble people living in the country and that their style has a simplicity and directness which marks a deliberate break with the artificial poetic diction of the eighteenth century. But the latter characteristic is not really separable from the substance of Wordsworth's poetry. What he wrote came from the depths of the man, and his style when at its best is simply the result of his effort to deal faithfully with his experience.

## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND EDITION OF LYRICAL BALLADS<sup>1</sup>

THE first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavor to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the other hand, I

was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defense of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more

<sup>1</sup> The second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, with additions, was published in two volumes in 1800. The Preface which was then added was later revised and enlarged, and is here printed in its final form.

unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defense; yet I am sensible that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian;<sup>1</sup> and in our own country, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these

attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonorable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavoring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust), because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and

<sup>1</sup>The first three belong to the great period of Latin poetry, the latter two to a later age comparatively barren of high achievement.



because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. 5 Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they 10 are conferring honor upon themselves and their art in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle 15 tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation.<sup>1</sup>

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which 20 some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonorable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of 30 difference, that each of them has a worthy purpose. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived, but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that 35 my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a purpose. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the 40 spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic 45 sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation 50 of these general representatives to each other,

we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affection strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavor to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I

<sup>1</sup>It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day (Wordsworth's note).



had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavor made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonorable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavored utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in meter seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavored to look steadily at my subject; consequently there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

"If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of meter, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the meter, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the

head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;  
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.  
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;  
*A different object do these eyes require;*  
*My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;*  
*And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;*  
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;  
To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
*I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,*  
*And weep the more because I weep in vain.*<sup>1</sup>

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rime and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly,<sup>25</sup> which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there neither<sup>35</sup> is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters: but where<sup>40</sup> shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of<sup>45</sup> the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry<sup>2</sup> sheds no

tears "such as Angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor<sup>3</sup> that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rime and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language<sup>10</sup> with that of Prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the<sup>15</sup> language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition<sup>20</sup> from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if meter be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments; for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendor of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have their due effect if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the Reader must depend entirely on just notions upon<sup>50</sup> this subject, and as it is in itself of high im-

Prose is Meter; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis, because lines and passages of meter so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable (Wordsworth's note).

<sup>3</sup>An ethereal fluid that flows in the veins of the gods.

<sup>1</sup>Gray's *Sonnet on the Death of Richard West*.

<sup>2</sup>I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to



portance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labor is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him?—He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than any other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection, which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and the more industriously he applies this principle the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavors occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry, as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry,



as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the ob-

jects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labor and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, or natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks

before and after."<sup>1</sup> He is the rock of defense for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs: in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favorite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge—it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labors of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.—It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavor to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry in general, but especially to those parts

of compositions where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorize the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are colored by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in meter, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but

<sup>1</sup>*Hamlet*, IV, iv, 37.



for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to meter; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of meter is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called "poetic diction," arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the meter obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me—to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the meter, and that it is injudicious to write in

meter, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which meter is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying meter with certain appropriate colors of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly underrate the power of meter in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished chiefly to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the



opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of meter to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rime, than in prose. The meter of the old ballads is very artless, yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of the distressful parts of *Clarissa Harlowe*, or the *Gamester*,<sup>1</sup> while Shakespeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.—On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his meter has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with meter in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of meter, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a *systematic* defense of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate

reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude, are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of meter, and to show that meter is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an over-balance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rime or meter of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of meter, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which

<sup>1</sup>The former a novel by Samuel Richardson, published in 1748, the latter a tragedy by Edward Moore, published in 1753.

is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavored to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence

in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added that the critic ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness of stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:—

I put my hat upon my head,  
And walked into the Strand,  
And there I met another man  
Whose hat was in his hand.

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the *Babes in the Wood*.

These pretty Babes with hand in hand  
Went wandering up and down;  
But never more they saw the Man  
Approaching from the Town.

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the meter, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can lead to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling

in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption that on other occasions where we have been displeased he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself), but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by

metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavored to recommend: for the Reader will say that he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honorable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them: we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained, and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining; and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.



## LINES

LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE, WHICH  
STANDS NEAR THE LAKE OF ESTHWAITE,  
ON A DESOLATE PART OF THE SHORE,  
COMMANDING A BEAUTIFUL PROSPECT<sup>1</sup>

NAY, Traveler! rest. This lonely Yew-tree  
stands

Far from all human dwelling: what if here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb?  
What if the bee love not these barren boughs?  
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling  
waves,

That break against the shore, shall lull thy  
mind

By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

Who he was

That piled these stones and with the mossy  
sod

First covered, and here taught this agéd Tree  
With its dark arms to form a circling bower, <sup>11</sup>  
I well remember.—He was one who owned  
No common soul. In youth by science  
nursed,

And led by nature into a wild scene  
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth <sup>15</sup>

A favored Being, knowing no desire  
Which genius did not hallow; 'gainst the taint  
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,  
And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,

All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,  
Owed him no service; wherefore he at once <sup>21</sup>

With indignation turned himself away,  
And with the food of pride sustained his soul

In solitude.—Stranger! these gloomy boughs  
Had charms for him; and here he loved to sit,

His only visitants a straggling sheep, <sup>26</sup>  
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper:

And on these barren rocks, with fern and  
heath,

And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,  
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour <sup>30</sup>

A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here  
An emblem of his own unfruitful life:

And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze  
On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis

Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became  
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain <sup>36</sup>

The beauty, still more beauteous! Nor, that  
time,

When nature had subdued him to herself,  
Would he forget those Beings to whose minds,

Warm from the labors of benevolence, <sup>40</sup>  
The world, and human life, appeared a scene

Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh,  
Inly disturbed, to think that others felt

What he must never feel: and so, lost Man!  
On visionary views would fancy feed, <sup>45</sup>

Till his eye streamed with tears. In this  
deep vale

He died,—this seat his only monument.

If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and know  
that pride, <sup>50</sup>

How'er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness; that he who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used; that thought with  
him

Is in its infancy. The man whose eye <sup>55</sup>  
Is ever on himself doth look on one,

The least of Nature's works, one who might  
move

The wise man to that scorn which wisdom  
holds

Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love;

True dignity abides with him alone <sup>61</sup>  
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,

Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
In lowliness of heart.

WE ARE SEVEN<sup>2</sup>

—A SIMPLE Child,

That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl: <sup>5</sup>  
She was eight years old, she said;

Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad: <sup>10</sup>

Her eyes were fair, and very fair;  
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be?"

"How many? Seven in all," she said, <sup>15</sup>  
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."  
She answered, "Seven are we;

And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea. <sup>20</sup>

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother;

And, in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell, <sup>25</sup>  
And two are gone to sea,

Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

<sup>1</sup>Begun in 1787, completed in 1795, published in 1798.

<sup>2</sup>Composed in 1798, published in the same year.

Then did the little Maid reply,  
 "Seven boys and girls are we;  
 Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
 Beneath the church-yard tree."

30

"You run about, my little Maid,  
 Your limbs they are alive;  
 If two are in the church-yard laid,  
 Then ye are only five."

35

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"  
 The little Maid replied,  
 "Twelve steps or more from my mother's  
 door,  
 And they are side by side."

40

"My stockings there I often knit,  
 My kerchief there I hem;  
 And there upon the ground I sit,  
 And sing a song to them."

45

"And often after sunset, Sir,  
 When it is light and fair,  
 I take my little porringer,  
 And eat my supper there."

"The first that died was sister Jane;  
 In bed she moaning lay,  
 Till God released her of her pain;  
 And then she went away."

50

"So in the church-yard she was laid;  
 And, when the grass was dry,  
 Together round her grave we played,  
 My brother John and I."

55

"And when the ground was white with snow,  
 And I could run and slide,  
 My brother John was forced to go,  
 And he lies by her side."

60

"How many are you, then," said I,  
 "If they two are in heaven?"  
 Quick was the little Maid's reply,  
 "O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead! 65  
 Their spirits are in heaven!"  
 'T was throwing words away; for still  
 The little Maid would have her will,  
 And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

## ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS<sup>1</sup>

I HAVE a boy of five years old;  
 His face is fair and fresh to see;  
 His limbs are cast in beauty's mold,  
 And dearly he loves me.

<sup>1</sup>Written and published in 1798.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk, 5  
 Our quiet home all full in view,  
 And held such intermitted talk  
 As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran;  
 I thought of Kilve's delightful shore, 10  
 Our pleasant home when spring began,  
 A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
 Some fond regrets to entertain;  
 With so much happiness to spare, 15  
 I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet  
 Of lambs that bounded through the glade,  
 From shade to sunshine, and as fleet  
 From sunshine back to shade. 20

Birds warbled round me—and each trace  
 Of inward sadness had its charm;  
 Kilve, thought I, was a favored place,  
 And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim 25  
 And graceful in his rustic dress!  
 And, as we talked, I questioned him,  
 In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"  
 I said, and took him by the arm, 30  
 "On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green sea,  
 Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,  
 While still I held him by the arm,  
 And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be 35  
 Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so:  
 My little Edward, tell me why."—  
 "I cannot tell, I do not know."—  
 "Why, this is strange," said I; 40

"For here are woods, hills smooth and warm:  
 There surely must some reason be  
 Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm  
 For Kilve by the green sea."

At this my boy hung down his head, 45  
 He blushed with shame, nor made reply;  
 And three times to the child I said,  
 "Why, Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised—there was in sight,  
 It caught his eye, he saw it plain— 50  
 Upon the house-top, glittering bright,  
 A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And eased his mind with this reply:  
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock;  
And that's the reason why." 55

O dearest, dearest boy! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn. 60

## GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL<sup>1</sup>

### A TRUE STORY

OH! WHAT's the matter? what's the matter?  
What is't that ails young Harry Gill?  
That evermore his teeth they chatter,  
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!  
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack, 5  
Good duffel<sup>2</sup> gray, and flannel fine;  
He has a blanket on his back,  
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill; 10  
The neighbors tell, and tell you truly,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
At night, at morning, and at noon,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;  
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon, 15  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still!

Young Harry was a lusty drover,  
And who so stout of limb as he?  
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;  
His voice was like the voice of three. 20  
Old Goody Blake was old and poor;  
Ill fed she was, and thinly clad;  
And any man who passed her door  
Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling;  
And then her three hours' work at night, 25  
Alas! 'twas hardly worth the telling,  
It would not pay for candle-light.  
Remote from sheltered village-green,  
On a hill's northern side she dwelt, 30  
Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,  
And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,  
Two poor old Dames, as I have known, 35  
Will often live in one small cottage;  
But she, poor Woman! housed alone.

'Twas well enough when summer came,  
The long, warm, lightsome summer-day  
Then at her door the *canty*<sup>3</sup> Dame  
Would sit, as any linnet, gay. 40

But when the ice our streams did fetter,  
Oh then how her old bones would shake!  
You would have said, if you had met her,  
'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake. 45  
Her evenings then were dull and dead:  
Sad case it was, as you may think,  
For very cold to go to bed,  
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her! whene'er in winter  
The winds at night had made a rout; 50  
And scattered many a lusty splinter  
And many a rotten bough about.  
Yet never had she, well or sick,  
As every man who knew her says,  
A pile beforehand, turf or stick, 55  
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
And made her poor old bones to ache,  
Could any thing be more alluring  
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake? 60  
And, now and then, it must be said,  
When her old bones were cold and chill,  
She left her fire, or left her bed,  
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected  
This trespass of old Goody Blake; 65  
And vowed that she should be detected—  
That he on her would vengeance take.  
And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
And to the fields his road would take; 70  
And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
Thus looking out did Harry stand:  
The moon was full and shining clearly, 75  
And crisp with frost the stubble land.  
—He hears a noise—he's all awake—  
Again?—on tip-toe down the hill  
He softly creeps—'tis Goody Blake;  
She's at the hedge of Harry Gill! 80

Right glad was he when he beheld her:  
Stick after stick did Goody pull:  
He stood behind a bush of elder,  
Till she had filled her apron full. 85  
When with her load she turned about,  
The by-way back again to take;  
He started forward, with a shout,  
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

<sup>1</sup>Written and published in 1798.

<sup>2</sup>Coarse woolen cloth with thick nap.

<sup>3</sup>Cheerful.



And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
 And by the arm he held her fast, 90  
 And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
 And cried, "I've caught you then at last!"  
 Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
 Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
 And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed 95  
 To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
 While Harry held her by the arm—  
 "God! who art never out of hearing,  
 O may he never more be warm!" 100  
 The cold, cold moon above her head,  
 Thus on her knees did Goody pray;  
 Young Harry heard what she had said:  
 And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow 105  
 That he was cold and very chill:  
 His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,  
 Alas! that day for Harry Gill!  
 That day he wore a riding-coat,  
 But not a whit the warmer he: 110  
 Another was on Thursday brought,  
 And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,  
 And blankets were about him pinned;  
 Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter, 115  
 Like a loose casement in the wind.  
 And Harry's flesh it fell away;  
 And all who see him say, 'tis plain,  
 That, live as long as live he may,  
 He never will be warm again. 120

No word to any man he utters,  
 A-bed or up, to young or old;  
 But ever to himself he mutters,  
 "Poor Harry Gill is very cold."  
 A-bed or up, by night or day; 125  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
 Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
 Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

### SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN; WITH AN INCIDENT IN  
 WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED<sup>1</sup>

IN THE sweet shire of Cardigan,  
 Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,  
 An old Man dwells, a little man,—  
 'Tis said he once was tall.  
 Full five-and-thirty years he lived 5  
 A running huntsman merry;  
 And still the center of his cheek  
 Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,  
 And hill and valley rang with glee 10  
 When Echo banded, round and round,  
 The halloo of Simon Lee.  
 In those proud days, he little cared  
 For husbandry or tillage;  
 To blither tasks did Simon rouse 15  
 The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
 Could leave both man and horse behind;  
 And often, ere the chase was done,  
 He reeled, and was stone-blind. 20  
 And still there's something in the world  
 At which his heart rejoices;  
 For when the chiming hounds are out,  
 He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change!—bereft 25  
 Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see!  
 Old Simon to the world is left  
 In liveried poverty.  
 His Master's dead,—and no one now  
 Dwells in the Hall of Ivor; 30  
 Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;  
 He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;  
 His body, dwindled and awry,  
 Rests upon ankles swollen and thick; 35  
 His legs are thin and dry.  
 One prop he has, and only one,  
 His wife, an aged woman,  
 Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
 Upon the village Common. 40

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
 Not twenty paces from the door,  
 A scrap of land they have, but they  
 Are poorest of the poor. 45  
 This scrap of land he from the heath  
 Enclosed when he was stronger;  
 But what to them avails the land  
 Which he can till no longer?

Oft, working by her Husband's side,  
 Ruth does what Simon cannot do; 50  
 For she, with scanty cause for pride,  
 Is stouter of the two.  
 And, though you with your utmost skill  
 From labor could not wean them,  
 'Tis little, very little—all 55  
 That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store  
 As he to you will tell,  
 For still, the more he works, the more  
 Do his weak ankles swell. 60

<sup>1</sup>Written and published in 1798.

My gentle Reader, I perceive  
How patiently you've waited,  
And now I fear that you expect  
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind  
Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
O gentle Reader! you would find  
A tale in every thing.  
What more I have to say is short,  
And you must kindly take it:  
It is no tale; but, should you think,  
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see  
This old Man doing all he could  
To unearth the root of an old tree,  
A stump of rotten wood.  
The mattock tottered in his hand;  
So vain was his endeavor,  
That at the root of the old tree  
He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,  
Give me your tool," to him I said;  
And at the word right gladly he  
Received my proffered aid.  
I struck, and with a single blow  
The tangled root I severed,  
At which the poor old Man so long  
And vainly had endeavored.

The tears into his eyes were brought,  
And thanks and praises seemed to run  
So fast out of his heart, I thought  
They never would have done.  
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
With coldness still returning;  
Alas! the gratitude of men  
Hath oftener left me mourning.

### LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING<sup>1</sup>

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sat reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

<sup>1</sup>Written and published in 1798.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—  
But the least motion which they made,  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?

### EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY<sup>2</sup>

"WHY, William, on that old gray stone,  
Thus for the length of half a day,  
Why, William, sit you thus alone,  
And dream your time away?"

"Where are your books?—that light be-  
queathed  
To Beings else forlorn and blind!  
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed  
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,  
As if she for no purpose bore you;  
As if you were her first-born birth,  
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,  
When life was sweet, I knew not why,  
To me my good friend Matthew spake,  
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;  
We cannot bid the ear be still;  
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,  
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
Which of themselves our minds impress;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?"

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,  
Conversing as I may,  
I sit upon this old gray stone,  
And dream my time away."

<sup>2</sup>Written and published in 1798. This poem and the one which follows "arose out of conversation with a friend who was somewhat unreasonably attached to modern books of moral philosophy" (Wordsworth, Preface to first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*).

THE TABLES TURNED<sup>1</sup>

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;  
Or surely you'll grow double:  
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;  
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head, 5  
A freshening luster mellow  
Through all the long green fields has spread,  
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:  
Come, hear the woodland linnet, 10  
How sweet his music! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher:  
Come forth into the light of things, 15  
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless—  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings; 25  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—  
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;  
Close up those barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart 30  
That watches and receives.

## LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE  
WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13, 1798<sup>2</sup>

FIVE years have passed; five summers, with  
the length  
Of five long winters! and again I hear

<sup>1</sup>Written and published in 1793.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1798. "No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol!" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*). This great poem is of the utmost importance for understanding the influence Wordsworth felt from nature.

These waters, rolling from their mountain-  
springs

With a soft inland murmur.—Once again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, 5  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect  
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.

The day is come when I again repose  
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10  
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-  
tufts,

Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,  
Are clad in one green hue, and lose them-  
selves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little  
lines 15

Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral  
farms,

Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke  
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!

With some uncertain notice, as might seem  
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods 20  
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire  
The hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,

Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:

But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din 25

Of towns and cities, I have owed to them

In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,

Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;

And passing even into my purer mind,

With tranquil restoration:—feelings too 30

Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,

As have no slight or trivial influence

On that best portion of a good man's life,

His little, nameless, unremembered, acts

Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust, 35

To them I may have owed another gift,

Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,

In which the burthen of the mystery,

In which the heavy and the weary weight

Of all this unintelligible world, 40

Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,

In which the affections gently lead us on,—

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame

And even the motion of our human blood

Almost suspended, we are laid asleep 45

In body, and become a living soul:

While with an eye made quiet by the power

Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,

We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft— 50

In darkness and amid the many shapes

Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir

Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,

Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—

How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee, 55



O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the  
woods,  
How often has my spirit, turned to thee!  
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished  
thought,  
With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60  
The picture of the mind revives again:  
While here I stand, not only with the sense  
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts  
That in this moment there is life and food  
For future years. And so I dare to hope, 65  
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was  
when first  
I came among these hills; when like a roe  
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides  
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
Wherever nature led: more like a man 70  
Flying from something that he dreads, than  
one  
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature  
then  
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone by)  
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint 75  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colors and their forms, were then to me  
An appetite; a feeling and a love, 80  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,  
And all its aching joys are now no more,  
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this 85  
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts  
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,  
Abundant recompense. For I have learned  
To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-  
times 90  
The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime 95  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
A motion and a spirit, that impels 100  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things. Therefore am  
I still  
A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and of all that we behold  
From this green earth; of all the mighty  
world 105  
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,  
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize

In nature and the language of the sense, 108  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,  
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul  
Of all my moral being.

Not perchance,  
If I were not thus taught, should I the more  
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:  
For thou art with me here upon the banks  
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend, 115  
My dear, dear Friend;<sup>1</sup> and in thy voice I  
catch  
The language of my former heart, and read  
My former pleasures in the shooting lights  
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while  
May I behold in thee what I was once, 120  
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,  
Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy: for she can so impress 125  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all 130  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon  
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk; 135  
And let the misty mountain-winds be free  
To blow against thee; and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,  
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing  
thoughts  
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me, 145  
And these my exhortations! Nor, per-  
chance—  
If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these  
gleams  
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget  
That on the banks of this delightful stream 150  
We stood together; and that I, so long  
A worshiper of Nature, hither came  
Unwearied in that service: rather say  
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal  
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget, 155  
That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,  
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me  
More dear, both for themselves and for thy  
sake!

<sup>1</sup>Dorothy Wordsworth.

# STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN<sup>1</sup>

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:  
And I will dare to tell,  
But in the Lover's ear alone,  
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day 5  
Fresh as a rose in June,  
I to her cottage bent my way,  
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
All over the wide lea; 10  
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;  
And, as we climbed the hill,  
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot 15  
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!  
And all the while my eyes I kept  
On the descending moon. 20

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof  
He raised, and never stopped:  
When down behind the cottage roof,  
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide 25  
Into a Lover's head!  
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,  
"If Lucy should be dead!"

# SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS<sup>2</sup>

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there were none to praise  
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone 5  
Half hidden from the eye!  
—Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be; 10  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

# I TRAVELED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN<sup>3</sup>

I TRAVELED among unknown men,  
In lands beyond the sea;  
Nor, England! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream! 5  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire; 10  
And she I cherished turned her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed  
The bowers where Lucy played;  
And thine too is the last green field 15  
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

# THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER<sup>4</sup>

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown;  
This Child I to myself will take;  
She shall be mine, and I will make 5  
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse: and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn,  
Or up the mountain springs; 15  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her; for her the willow bend; 20  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mold the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear 25  
To her; and she shall lean her ear

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1800.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1800.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1807.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1800.

In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

30

"And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell."

35

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
How soon my Lucy's race was run!  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

40

### A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL<sup>1</sup>

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;  
I had no human fears:  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

5

### LUCY GRAY

#### OR SOLITUDE<sup>2</sup>

OF I had heard of Lucy Gray:  
And, when I crossed the wild,  
I chanced to see at break of day  
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;  
She dwelt on a wide moor,  
—The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door!

5

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
The hare upon the green;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

10

"To-night will be a stormy night—  
You to the town must go;  
And take a lantern, Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow."

15

"That, Father! will I gladly do:  
'Tis scarcely afternoon—  
The minster-clock has just struck two,  
And yonder is the moon!"

20

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a faggot-band;  
He plied his work;—and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

25

The storm came on before its time:  
She wandered up and down;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb:  
But never reached the town.

30

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

35

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

40

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,  
"In heaven we all shall meet;"  
—When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge  
They tracked the footmarks small;  
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall;

45

And then an open field they crossed:  
The marks were still the same;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;  
And to the bridge they came.

50

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank;  
And further there were none!

55

—Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

60

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1800.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1800.



RUTH<sup>1</sup>

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,  
 Her Father took another Mate;  
 And Ruth, not seven years old,  
 A slighted child, at her own will  
 Went wandering over dale and hill,  
 In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,  
 And music from that pipe could draw  
 Like sounds of winds and floods;  
 Had built a bower upon the green,  
 As if she from her birth had been  
 An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone  
 She seemed to live; her thoughts her own,  
 Herself her own delight;  
 Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay;  
 And, passing thus the live-long day,  
 She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore—  
 A military casque he wore,  
 With splendid feathers dressed;  
 He brought them from the Cherokees;  
 The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
 And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung: 25  
 But no! he spake the English tongue,  
 And bore a soldier's name;  
 And, when America was free  
 From battle and from jeopardy,  
 He 'cross the ocean came. 30

With hues of genius on his cheek  
 In finest tones the Youth could speak:  
 —While he was yet a boy,  
 The moon, the glory of the sun,  
 And streams that murmur as they run,  
 Had been his dearest joy. 35

He was a lovely youth! I guess  
 The panther in the wilderness  
 Was not so fair as he;  
 And, when he chose to sport and play,  
 No dolphin ever was so gay  
 Upon the tropic sea. 40

Among the Indians he had fought,  
 And with him many tales he brought  
 Of pleasure and of fear;  
 Such tales as told to any maid  
 By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
 Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout!  
 Who quit their fold with dance and shout, 50

Their pleasant Indian town,  
 To gather strawberries all day long;  
 Returning with a choral song  
 When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change 55  
 Their blossoms, through a boundless range  
 Of intermingling hues;  
 With budding, fading, faded flowers  
 They stand the wonder of the bowers  
 From morn to evening dews. 60

He told of the magnolia, spread  
 High as a cloud, high over head!  
 The cypress and her spire;  
 —Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam  
 Cover a hundred leagues, and seem 65  
 To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,  
 And many an endless, endless lake,  
 With all its fairy crowds  
 Of islands, that together lie 70  
 As quietly as spots of sky  
 Among the evening clouds.

“How pleasant,” then he said, “it were  
 A fisher or a hunter there,  
 In sunshine or in shade 75  
 To wander with an easy mind;  
 And build a household fire, and find  
 A home in every glade!

“What days and what bright years! Ah me!  
 Our life were life indeed, with thee 80  
 So passed in quiet bliss,  
 And all the while,” said he, “to know  
 That we were in a world of woe,  
 On such an earth as this!”

And then he sometimes interwove 85  
 Fond thoughts about a father's love;  
 “For there,” said he, “are spun  
 Around the heart such tender ties,  
 That our own children to our eyes  
 Are dearer than the sun. 90

“Sweet Ruth! and could you go with me  
 My helpmate in the woods to be,  
 Our shed at night to rear;  
 Or run, my own adopted bride,  
 A sylvan huntress at my side, 95  
 And drive the flying deer!

“Belovéd Ruth!”—No more he said,  
 The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed  
 A solitary tear:  
 She thought again—and did agree 100  
 With him to sail across the sea,  
 And drive the flying deer.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1799, published in 1800.

"And now, as fitting is and right,  
We in the church our faith will plight,  
A husband and a wife." 105  
Even so they did; and I may say  
That to sweet Ruth that happy day  
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,  
Delighted all the while to think 110  
That on those lonesome floods,  
And green savannahs, she should share  
His board with lawful joy, and bear  
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told, 115  
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
And, with his dancing crest,  
So beautiful, through savage lands  
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands  
Of Indians in the West. 120

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
The tumult of a tropic sky,  
Might well be dangerous food  
For him, a Youth to whom was given  
So much of earth—so much of heaven, 125  
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found  
Irregular in sight or sound  
Did to his mind impart  
A kindred impulse, seemed allied 130  
To his own powers, and justified  
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,  
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,  
Fair trees and gorgeous flowers;  
The breezes their own languor lent; 135  
The stars had feelings, which they sent  
Into those favored bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits I ween  
That sometimes there did intervene 140  
Pure hopes of high intent:  
For passions linked to form so fair  
And stately, needs must have their share  
Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw, 145  
With men to whom no better law  
Nor better life was known;  
Deliberately, and undeceived,  
Those wild men's vices he received,  
And gave them back his own. 150

His genius and his moral frame  
Were thus impaired, and he became

The slave of low desires:  
A Man who without self-control  
Would seek what the degraded soul 155  
Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight  
Had wooed the Maiden, day and night  
Had loved her, night and morn:  
What could he less than love a Maid 160  
Whose heart with so much nature played?  
So kind and so forlorn!

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,  
"O Ruth! I have been worse than dead;  
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain, 165  
Encompassed me on every side  
When I, in confidence and pride,  
Had crossed the Atlantic main.

"Before me shone a glorious world—  
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled 170  
To music suddenly:  
I looked upon those hills and plains,  
And seemed as if let loose from chains,  
To live at liberty.

"No more of this; for now, by thee 175  
Dear Ruth! more happily set free  
With nobler zeal I burn;  
My soul from darkness is released,  
Like the whole sky when to the east  
The morning doth return." 180

Full soon that better mind was gone;  
No hope, no wish remained, not one,—  
They stirred him now no more;  
New objects did new pleasure give, 185  
And once again he wished to live  
As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,  
They for the voyage were prepared,  
And went to the sea-shore,  
But, when they thither came, the Youth 190  
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth  
Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth!—Such pains she had,  
That she in half a year was mad,  
And in a prison housed; 195  
And there, with many a doleful song  
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong  
She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,  
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew, 200  
Nor pastimes of the May;  
—They all were with her in her cell;  
And a clear brook with cheerful knell  
Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain, 205  
 There came a respite to her pain;  
 She from her prison fled;  
 But of the Vagrant none took thought;  
 And where it liked her best she sought  
 Her shelter and her bread. 210

Among the fields she breathed again:  
 The master-current of her brain  
 Ran permanent and free;  
 And, coming to the Banks of Tone,  
 There did she rest; and dwell alone 215  
 Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools  
 That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,  
 And airs that gently stir  
 The vernal leaves—she loved them still; 220  
 Nor ever taxed them with the ill  
 Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies;  
 But, till the warmth of summer skies  
 And summer days is gone, 225  
 (And all do in this tale agree)  
 She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,  
 And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray!  
 And Ruth will, long before her day, 230  
 Be broken down and old:  
 Sore aches she needs must have! but less  
 Of mind, than body's wretchedness,  
 From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is pressed by want of food, 235  
 She from her dwelling in the wood  
 Repairs to a road-side;  
 And there she begs at one steep place  
 Where up and down with easy pace  
 The horsemen-travelers ride. 240

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,  
 Or thrown away; but with a flute  
 Her loneliness she cheers:  
 This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,  
 At evening in his homeward walk 245  
 The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
 Setting her little water-mills  
 By spouts and fountains wild—  
 Such small machinery as she turned 250  
 Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
 A young and happy Child!

Farewell! and when thy days are told,  
 Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mold  
 Thy corpse shall buried be, 255  
 For thee a funeral bell shall ring,  
 And all the congregation sing  
 A Christian psalm for thee.

MICHAEL<sup>1</sup>

## A PASTORAL POEM

IF FROM the public way you turn your steps  
 Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
 Ghyll,<sup>2</sup>

You will suppose that with an upright path  
 Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent  
 The pastoral mountains front you, face to  
 face. 5

But, courage! for around that boisterous  
 brook

The mountains have all opened out them-  
 selves,

And made a hidden valley of their own.

No habitation can be seen; but they  
 Who journey thither find themselves alone 10  
 With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and  
 kites

That overhead are sailing in the sky.

It is in truth an utter solitude;

Nor should I have made mention of this Dell  
 But for one object which you might pass by, 15

Might see and notice not. Beside the brook  
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!  
 And to that simple object appertains

A story—unenriched with strange events,  
 Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20

Or for the summer shade. It was the first  
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
 Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men  
 Whom I already loved; not verily  
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and  
 hills 25

Where was their occupation and abode.

And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy  
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power  
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency

Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30  
 For passions that were not my own, and think  
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)

On man, the heart of man, and human life.

Therefore, although it be a history

Homely and rude, I will relate the same 35  
 For the delight of a few natural hearts;

<sup>1</sup>Written and published in 1800. "Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as *The Brothers*. The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*). Wordsworth wrote to a friend: "I have attempted to give a picture of a man, of strong mind and lively sensibility, agitated by two of the most powerful affections of the human heart: the parental affection and the love of property (*landed* property), including the feelings of inheritance, home, and personal and family independence."

<sup>2</sup>A ravine with a stream running through it.



And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills  
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40  
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his  
name;

An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,  
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs, 45  
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt  
And watchful more than ordinary men.

Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,  
Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes, 49  
When others heeded not, He heard the South  
Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.

The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,  
"The winds are now devising work for me!" 55

And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives  
The traveler to a shelter, summoned him  
Up to the mountains: he had been alone  
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
That came to him, and left him, on the  
heights. 60

So lived he till his eightieth year was past.  
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose  
That the green valleys, and the streams and  
rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's  
thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had  
breathed 65

The common air; hills, which with vigorous  
step

He had so often climbed; which had impressed  
So many incidents upon his mind

Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;  
Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70

Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts

The certainty of honorable gain;  
Those fields, those hills—what could they  
less? had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him 75  
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,

The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.  
His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—  
Though younger than himself full twenty  
years. 80

She was a woman of a stirring life,  
Whose heart was in her house: two wheels she  
had

Of antique form; this large, for spinning wool;  
That small, for flax; and if one wheel had rest  
It was because the other was at work. 85

The Pair had but one inmate in their house,

An only Child, who had been born to them  
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began  
To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's  
phrase,

With one foot in the grave. This only Son, 90  
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a  
storm,

The one of an inestimable worth,  
Made all their household. I may truly say,  
That they were as a proverb in the vale

For endless industry. When day was gone, 95  
And from their occupations out of doors

The Son and Father were come home, even  
then,

Their labor did not cease; unless when all  
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,  
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed  
milk, 100

Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,  
\*And their plain home-made cheese. Yet  
when the meal

Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)  
And his old Father both betook themselves  
To such convenient work as might employ 105  
Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to card  
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair  
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's  
edge, 110

That in our ancient uncouth country style  
With huge and black projection overbowed  
Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp;  
An aged utensil, which had performed 115  
Service beyond all others of its kind.

Early at evening did it burn—and late,  
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
Which, going by from year to year, had  
found,

And left, the couple neither gay perhaps 120  
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,  
Living a life of eager industry.

And now, when Luke had reached his eight-  
eenth year,

There by the light of this old lamp they sat,  
Father and Son, while far into the night 125

The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,  
Making the cottage through the silent hours  
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.

This light was famous in its neighborhood,  
And was a public symbol of the life 130

That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it  
chanced,

Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
Stood single, with large prospect, north and  
south,

High into Easedale,<sup>1</sup> up to Dunmail-Raise,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Near Grasmere.

<sup>2</sup>The pass on the way from Grasmere to Keswick.

And westward to the village near the lake; 135  
 And from this constant light, so regular  
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
 Both old and young, was named the *Evening*  
*Star*.

Thus living on through such a length of  
 years, 140  
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs  
 Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's  
 heart

This son of his old age was yet more dear—  
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood  
 of all— 145

Than that a child, more than all other gifts  
 That earth can offer to declining man,  
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking  
 thoughts,

And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
 By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150  
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
 His heart and his heart's joy! For oftentimes  
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
 Had done him female service, not alone  
 For pastime and delight, as is the use 155  
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced  
 To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked  
 His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love, 160  
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he  
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's  
 stool

Sat with a fettered sheep before him stretched  
 Under the large old oak, that near his door 165  
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of  
 shade,

Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,  
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
 The *Clipping Tree*, a name which yet it bears.  
 There, while they two were sitting in the  
 shade, 170

With others round them, earnest all and  
 blithe,

Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts  
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the  
 shears. 176

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy  
 grew up

A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
 Two steady roses that were five years old;  
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut 180  
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped  
 With iron, making it throughout in all  
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,

And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipped  
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed 185  
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;  
 And, to his office prematurely called,  
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,  
 Something between a hindrance and a help;  
 And for this cause not always, I believe, 190  
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise;  
 Though nought was left undone which staff,  
 or voice,  
 Or looks, or threatening gestures, could per-  
 form.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could  
 stand  
 Against the mountain blasts; and to the  
 heights,

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
 He with his Father daily went, and they  
 Were as companions, why should I relate  
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before  
 Were dearer now? that from the Boy there  
 came

Feelings and emanations—things which were  
 Light to the sun and music to the wind;  
 And that the old Man's heart seemed born  
 again?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up:  
 And now, when he had reached his eighteenth  
 year,  
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household  
 lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there came  
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been  
 bound

In surety for his brother's son, a man  
 Of an industrious life, and ample means;  
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
 Had pressed upon him; and old Michael now  
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,  
 A grievous penalty, but little less 216  
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-for  
 claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took  
 More hope out of his life than he supposed  
 That any old man ever could have lost. 220  
 As soon as he had armed himself with strength  
 To look his trouble in the face, it seemed  
 The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once  
 A portion of his patrimonial fields. 224  
 Such was his first resolve; he thought again,  
 And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,  
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,  
 "I have been toiling more than seventy years,  
 And in the open sunshine of God's love  
 Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours 230  
 Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think  
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.  
 Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself

Has scarcely been more diligent than I;  
 And I have lived to be a fool at last 235  
 To my own family. An evil man  
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
 Were false to us; and if he were not false,  
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this  
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him;—but 240  
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

“When I began, my purpose was to speak  
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.  
 Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land  
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free; 245  
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,  
 Another kinsman—he will be our friend  
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall  
 go, 250  
 And with his kinsman's help and his own  
 thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
 He may return to us. If here he stay,  
 What can be done? Where every one is poor,  
 What can be gained?”

At this the old Man paused, 255  
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
 Was busy, looking back into past times.  
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to  
 herself,

He was a parish-boy—at the church-door  
 They made a gathering for him, shillings,  
 pence, 260  
 And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbors  
 bought

A basket, which they filled with peddler's  
 wares;  
 And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
 Went up to London, found a master there,  
 Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy 265  
 To go and overlook his merchandise  
 Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous  
 rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor.  
 And, at his birthplace, built a chapel, floored  
 With marble which he sent from foreign  
 lands. 270

These thoughts, and many others of like sort,  
 Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,  
 And her face brightened. The old Man was  
 glad,

And thus resumed:—“Well, Isabel! this  
 scheme

These two days has been meat and drink to  
 me. 275

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.  
 —We have enough—I wish indeed that I  
 Were younger;—but this hope is a good hope.  
 —Make ready Luke's best garments, of the  
 best 279

Buy for him more, and let us send him forth

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:  
 —If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night.”  
 Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went  
 forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for five  
 days

Was restless morn and night, and all day  
 long 285

Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare  
 Things needful for the journey of her son.  
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
 To stop her in her work: for, when she lay  
 By Michael's side, she through the last two  
 nights 290

Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:  
 And when they rose at morning she could see  
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at  
 noon,

She said to Luke, while they two by them-  
 selves 294

Were sitting at the door, “Thou must not  
 go:

We have no other Child but thee to lose—  
 None to remember—do not go away,  
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die.”

The Youth made answer with a jocund voice;  
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears, 300  
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare  
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work;  
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared  
 As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length 306  
 The expected letter from their kinsman came.  
 With kind assurances that he would do  
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;  
 To which, requests were added, that forth-  
 with 310

He might be sent to him. Ten times or more  
 The letter was read over; Isabel  
 Went forth to show it to the neighbors round;  
 Nor was there at that time on English land  
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel  
 Had to her house returned, the old Man  
 said, 316

“He shall depart to-morrow.” To this word  
 The Housewife answered, talking much of  
 things

Which, if at such short notice he should go,  
 Would surely be forgotten. But at length 320  
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
 Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed  
 To build a Sheepfold; and, before he heard  
 The tidings of his melancholy loss, 325  
 For this same purpose he had gathered up  
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's  
 edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.



With Luke that evening thitherward he  
walked:

And soon as they had reached the place he  
stopped, 330

And thus the old Man spake to him:—"My  
Son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full heart  
I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
And all thy life hast been my daily joy. 335

I will relate to thee some little part  
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good  
When thou art from me, even if I should touch  
On things thou canst not know of.—After  
thou

First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls 340  
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away  
Two days, and blessings from thy Father's  
tongue

Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,  
And still I loved thee with increasing love.  
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds 345  
Than when I heard thee by our own fireside  
First uttering, without words, a natural tune;  
While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy  
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed  
month,

And in the open fields my life was passed 350  
And on the mountains; else I think that thou  
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's  
knees.

But we were playmates, Luke: among these  
hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and young  
Have played together, nor with me didst  
thou 355

Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."  
Luke had a manly heart; but at these words  
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his  
hand,

And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see  
That these are things of which I need not  
speak. 360

—Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
A kind and a good Father: and herein  
I but repay a gift which I myself  
Received at others' hands; for, though now old  
Beyond the common life of man, I still 365  
Remember them who loved me in my youth.  
Both of them sleep together: here they lived,  
As all their Forefathers had done; and when  
At length their time was come, they were not  
loath

To give their bodies to the family mold. 370  
I wished that thou should'st live the life they  
lived:

But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,  
And see so little gain from threescore years.  
These fields were burthened when they came  
to me;

Till I was forty years of age, not more 375  
Than half of my inheritance was mine.

I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my  
work,

And till these three weeks past the land was  
free.

—It looks as if it never could endure 379  
Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,  
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused;  
Then, pointing to the stones near which they  
stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed: 384  
"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,  
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—  
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own  
hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope;—we both may  
live

To see a better day. At eighty-four  
I still am strong and hale;—do thou thy  
part; 390

I will do mine.—I will begin again  
With many tasks that were resigned to thee:  
Up to the heights, and in among the storms,  
Will I without thee go again, and do  
All works which I was wont to do alone, 395  
Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee,  
Boy!

Thy heart these two weeks has been beating  
fast

With many hopes; it should be so—yes—  
yes—

I knew that thou could'st never have a wish  
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound to  
me 400

Only by links of love: when thou art gone,  
What will be left to us!—But, I forget  
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,  
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,  
When thou art gone away, should evil men 405  
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,  
And of this moment; hither turn thy thoughts,  
And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear  
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou  
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers  
lived, 410

Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee  
well—

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt  
see

A work which is not here: a covenant  
'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate 415  
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke  
stooped down,  
And, as his Father had requested, laid

The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the  
sight 420  
The old Man's grief broke from him; to his  
heart

He pressed his Son, he kisséd him and wept:  
And to the house together they returned.

—Hushed was that House in peace, or seem-  
ing peace,

Ere the night fell:—with morrow's dawn the  
Boy 425

Began his journey, and when he had reached  
The public way, he put on a bold face;  
And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,  
Came forth with wishes and with farewell  
prayers,

That followed him till he was out of sight. 430

A good report did from their Kinsman come,  
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy  
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,  
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were  
throughout

"The prettiest letters that were ever seen." 435  
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.  
So, many months passed on: and once again  
The Shepherd went about his daily work  
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and  
now 439

Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour  
He to that valley took his way, and there  
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke  
began

To slacken in his duty; and, at length,  
He in the dissolute city gave himself  
To evil courses: ignominy and shame 445  
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;  
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else  
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:  
I have conversed with more than one who  
well 451

Remember the old Man, and what he was  
Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks 455  
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,  
And listened to the wind; and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,  
And for the land, his small inheritance.  
And to that hollow dell from time to time 460  
Did he repair, to build the Fold, of which  
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet  
The pity which was then in every heart  
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all  
That many and many a day he thither went,  
And never lifted up a single stone. 466

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was he  
seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,  
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.

The length of full seven years, from time to  
time, 470

He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,  
And left the work unfinished when he died.  
Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
Survive her Husband: at her death the estate  
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand. 475  
The Cottage which was named the *Evening Star*  
Is gone—the plowshare has been through the  
ground

On which it stood; great changes have been  
wrought

In all the neighborhood:—yet the oak is left  
That grew beside their door; and the remains  
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen 481  
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll.

## TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING  
LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!

—There is a nest in a green dale,  
A harbor and a hold;  
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see  
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be 5  
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,  
And treading among flowers of joy  
Which at no season fade,  
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling, 10  
Shalt show us how divine a thing  
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,  
Nor leave thee, when gray hairs are nigh,  
A melancholy slave; 15  
But an old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,  
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

## ALICE FELL

OR  
POVERTY<sup>2</sup>

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,  
For threatening clouds the moon had drowned;  
When, as we hurried on, my ear  
Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways, 5  
I heard the sound,—and more and more;  
It seemed to follow with the chaise,  
And still I heard it as before.

<sup>1</sup>Written perhaps in 1801; printed in the *Morning Post*, 1802, and in the *Poems* of 1807.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1802, published in 1807.

At length I to the boy called out;  
He stopped his horses at the word, 10  
But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,  
Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast  
The horses scampered through the rain;  
But, hearing soon upon the blast 15  
The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,  
"Whence comes," said I, "this piteous  
moan?"

And there a little Girl I found,  
Sitting behind the chaise, alone. 20

"My cloak!" no other word she spake,  
But loud and bitterly she wept,  
As if her innocent heart would break;  
And down from off her seat she leapt.

"What ails you, child?"—she sobbed, "Look  
here!" 25  
I saw it in the wheel entangled  
A weather-beaten rag as e'er  
From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,  
It hung, nor could at once be freed; 30  
But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,  
A miserable rag indeed!

"And whither are you going, child,  
To-night along these lonesome ways?"  
"To Durham," answered she, half wild— 35  
"Then come with me into the chaise."

Insensible to all relief  
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send  
Sob after sob, as if her grief  
Could never, never have an end. 40

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"  
She checked herself in her distress,  
And said, "My name is Alice Fell;  
I'm fatherless and motherless.

"And I to Durham, Sir, belong." 45  
Again, as if the thought would choke  
Her very heart, her grief grew strong;  
And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end  
Was nigh; and, sitting by my side, 50  
As if she had lost her only friend  
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;  
Of Alice and her grief I told;  
And I gave money to the host, 55  
To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffel<sup>1</sup> gray,  
As warm a cloak as man can sell!"  
Proud creature was she the next day,  
The little orphan, Alice Fell! 60

## TO THE CUCKOO<sup>2</sup>

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice.  
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass 5  
Thy twofold shout I hear,  
From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,  
Of sunshine and of flowers, 10  
Thou bringest unto me a tale  
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No bird, but an invisible thing, 15  
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days  
I listened to; that Cry  
Which made me look a thousand ways  
In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet; 25  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blesséd Bird! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be 30  
An unsubstantial, faery place;  
That is fit home for Thee!

## MY HEART LEAPS UP<sup>3</sup>

MY HEART leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man; 5  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

<sup>1</sup>See note 2 on p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1802, published in 1807.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1802, published in 1807.



RESOLUTION AND  
INDEPENDENCE<sup>1</sup>

## I

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;  
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;  
The birds are singing in the distant woods;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove  
broods;  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chat-  
ters;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of  
waters.

## II

All things that love the sun are out of doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on the  
moors  
The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the splashy earth  
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth  
run.

## III

I was a Traveler then upon the moor,  
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;  
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;  
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:  
The pleasant season did my heart employ:  
My old remembrances went from me wholly;  
And all the ways of men, so vain and mel-  
ancholy.

## IV

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might  
Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low;  
To me that morning did it happen so;  
And fears and fancies thick upon me came;  
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew  
not, nor could name.

## V

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky;  
And I bethought me of the playful hare:  
Even such a happy Child of earth am I;  
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;  
Far from the world I walk, and from all care;

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1802, published in 1807. "Written at Town-  
end, Grasmere. This old Man I met a few hundred yards  
from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own  
mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning  
of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clark-  
son's, at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image  
of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell" (Words-  
worth, *Fennick Note*).

But there may come another day to me— 34  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

## VI

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,  
As if life's business were a summer mood;  
As if all needful things would come unsought  
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;  
But how can He expect that others should 40  
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call  
Love him, who for himself will take no heed  
at all?

## VII

I thought of Chatterton,<sup>2</sup> the marvelous Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride;  
Of Him<sup>3</sup> who walked in glory and in joy 45  
Following his plow, along the mountain-  
side:  
By our own spirits are we deified:  
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;  
But thereof come in the end despondency and  
madness.

## VIII

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace, 50  
A leading from above, a something given,  
Yet it befell that, in this lonely place,  
When I with these untoward thoughts had  
striven,  
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven  
I saw a Man before me unawares: 55  
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore gray  
hairs.

## IX

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence;  
Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
By what means it could thither come, and  
whence; 60  
So that it seems a thing endued with sense:  
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf  
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun itself;

## X

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,  
Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age:— 65  
His body was bent double, feet and head  
Coming together in life's pilgrimage;  
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage  
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,  
A more than human weight upon his frame  
had cast. 70

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Chatterton (1752–1770), who died by his own  
hand.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Burns.

## XI

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,  
 Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood:  
 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood  
 Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood, <sup>75</sup>  
 That heareth not the loud winds when they  
 call  
 And moveth all together, if it move at all.

## XII

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond  
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look  
 Upon the muddy water, which he coned, <sup>80</sup>  
 As if he had been reading in a book:  
 And now a stranger's privilege I took;  
 And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
 "This morning gives us promise of a glorious  
 day."

## XIII

A gentle answer did the old Man make, <sup>85</sup>  
 In courteous speech which forth he slowly  
 drew:  
 And him with further words I thus bespake,  
 "What occupation do you there pursue?  
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."  
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise <sup>90</sup>  
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes,

## XIV

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,  
 But each in solemn order followed each,  
 With something of a lofty utterance dressed—  
 Choice word and measured phrase, above the  
 reach <sup>95</sup>  
 Of ordinary men; a stately speech;  
 Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
 Religious men, who give to God and man  
 their dues.

## XV

He told, that to these waters he had come  
 To gather leeches, being old and poor: <sup>100</sup>  
 Employment hazardous and wearisome!  
 And he had many hardships to endure:  
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor  
 to moor;  
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice or  
 chance,  
 And in this way he gained an honest mainte-  
 nance. <sup>105</sup>

## XVI

The old Man still stood talking by my side;  
 But now his voice to me was like a stream  
 Scarce heard; nor word from word could I  
 divide;  
 And the whole body of the Man did seem

Like one whom I had met with in a dream; <sup>110</sup>  
 Or like a man from some far region sent,  
 To give me human strength, by apt admonish-  
 ment.

## XVII

My former thoughts returned: the fear that  
 kills;  
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;  
 Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills; <sup>115</sup>  
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
 —Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,  
 My question eagerly did I renew,  
 "How is it that you live, and what is it you  
 do?"

## XVIII

He with a smile did then his words repeat; <sup>120</sup>  
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far and  
 wide  
 He traveled; stirring thus above his feet  
 The waters of the pools where they abide.  
 "Once I could meet with them on every side;  
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay;  
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I  
 may." <sup>126</sup>

## XIX

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled  
 me:  
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
 About the weary moors continually, <sup>130</sup>  
 Wandering about alone and silently.  
 While I these thoughts within myself pur-  
 sued,  
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse  
 renewed.

## XX

And soon with this he other matter blended,  
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind, <sup>135</sup>  
 But stately in the main; and, when he ended,  
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find  
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.  
 "God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;  
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely  
 moor!" <sup>140</sup>

TO THE DAISY<sup>1</sup>

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is everywhere,  
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,  
 And all the long year through the heir  
 Of joy and sorrow;  
 Methinks that there abides in thee <sup>5</sup>  
 Some concord with humanity,  
 Given to no other flower I see  
 The forest thorough!

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1802, published in 1807.

Is it that Man is soon depressed?  
 A thoughtless Thing! who, once unbless'd, 10  
 Does little on his memory rest,  
     Or on his reason,  
 And Thou wouldst teach him how to find  
 A shelter under every wind,  
 A hope for times that are unkind 15  
     And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,  
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
 With friends to greet thee, or without,  
     Yet pleased and willing; 20  
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
 And all things suffering from all,  
 Thy function apostolical  
     In peace fulfilling.

COMPOSED UPON WEST-  
 MINSTER BRIDGE, SEP-  
 TEMBER 3, 1802<sup>1</sup>

EARTH has not anything to show more fair;  
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
 A sight so touching in its majesty:  
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare, 5  
 Ships, towers, domes, theaters, and temples  
     lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.  
 Never did sun more beautifully steep  
 In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill; 10  
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
 The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVE-  
 NING, CALM AND FREE<sup>2</sup>

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
 Breathless with adoration; the broad sun  
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity;  
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea:  
 Listen! the mighty Being is awake, 6  
 And doth with his eternal motion make  
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
 Dear Child!<sup>3</sup> dear Girl! that walkest with me  
     here,  
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,

Thy nature is not therefore less divine: 11  
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,  
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
 God being with thee when we know it not.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-  
 SIDE, NEAR CALAIS,  
 AUGUST, 1802<sup>4</sup>

FAIR Star of evening, Splendor of the west,  
 Star of my Country!—on the horizon's brink  
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to  
     sink

On England's bosom, yet well pleased to rest,  
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest 5  
 Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,  
 Shouldst be my Country's emblem; and  
     shouldst wink,

Bright Star! with laughter on her banners,  
     dressed

In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot  
 Beneath thee, that is England; there she  
     lies. 10

Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,  
 One life, one glory!—I, with many a fear  
 For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,  
 Among men who do not love her, linger here.

ON THE EXTINCTION  
 OF THE VENETIAN  
 REPUBLIC<sup>5</sup>

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee;  
 And was the safeguard of the west: the worth  
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth,  
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.

She was a maiden City, bright and free; 5  
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;

And, when she took unto herself a Mate,  
 She must espouse the everlasting State.<sup>6</sup>

And what if she had seen those glories fade,  
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;  
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid 11

When her long life hath reached its final day:  
 Men are we, and must grieve when even the  
     Shade

Of that which once was great is passed away.

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1807.

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1802, published in 1807. In the thirteenth century Venice controlled a portion of the Eastern Empire, and for a long time protected Western Europe from the Turks. The city was founded in the fifth century and had been independent for more than a thousand years when it was conquered by Napoleon in 1797, and its territory divided between Austria and France.

<sup>6</sup>An allusion to the annual ceremony, dating from the twelfth century, of marriage between Venice and the Adriatic, in which the Doge threw a ring into the sea.

<sup>1</sup>Written on 31 July, 1802, published in 1807.

<sup>2</sup>Written in August, 1802, published in 1807.

<sup>3</sup>Wordsworth's French daughter, Caroline.



TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE<sup>1</sup>

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men!  
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plow  
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless  
den;—

O miserable Chieftain! where and when<sup>5</sup>  
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do thou  
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:  
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,  
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left be-  
hind

Powers that will work for thee; air, earth,  
and skies;<sup>10</sup>

There's not a breathing of the common wind  
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;  
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR  
DOVER<sup>2</sup>

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;  
And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,  
The coast of France—the coast of France how  
near!

Drawn almost into frightful neighborhood.  
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood<sup>5</sup>  
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,  
A span of waters; yet what power is there!  
What mightiness for evil and for good!  
Even so doth God protect us if we be  
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters  
roll,<sup>10</sup>

Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;  
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree  
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul  
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

WRITTEN IN LONDON,  
SEPTEMBER, 1802<sup>3</sup>

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must  
look

For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed,  
To think that now our life is only dressed  
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,  
cook,

<sup>1</sup>Written probably in August, 1802; published in the *Morning Post* in 1803 and in the *Poems* of 1807. Toussaint was governor of St. Domingo and leader of the African slaves freed by decree of the French Convention in 1794. When Napoleon published an edict reestablishing slavery in St. Domingo Toussaint offered resistance, was arrested and sent to France in June, 1802, and there died in prison in April, 1803.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1807.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1807.

Or groom!—We must run glittering like a  
brook<sup>5</sup>

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest'd:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry; and these we adore:<sup>10</sup>  
Plain living and high thinking are no more:  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household laws.

LONDON, 1802<sup>4</sup>

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower<sup>5</sup>  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.  
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the<sup>10</sup>  
sea:

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN  
AMONG US<sup>5</sup>

GREAT men have been among us; hands that  
penned  
And tongues that uttered wisdom—better  
none:

The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington.  
Young Vane,<sup>6</sup> and others who called Milton  
friend.<sup>4</sup>

These moralists could act and comprehend:  
They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendor: what strength was, that would  
not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis  
strange,  
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had  
then.<sup>10</sup>

Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road;  
But equally a want of books and men!

<sup>4</sup>Written in September, 1802; published in 1807.

<sup>5</sup>Written in September, 1802; published in 1807.

<sup>6</sup>Algernon Sidney (1622?–1683), Andrew Marvel (1621–1678), James Harrington (1611–1677), and Sir Henry Vane (1612–1662).

## IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF<sup>1</sup>

IT is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwith-  
stood,"<sup>2</sup>

Roused though it be full often to a mood      5  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
That this most famous Stream in bogs and  
sands

Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armory of the invincible Knights of old:      10  
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue  
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals  
hold

Which Milton held.—In everything we are  
sprung  
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

## WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY<sup>3</sup>

WHEN I have borne in memory what has  
tamed

Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart  
When men change swords for ledgers, and de-  
sert

The student's bower for gold, some fears un-  
named

I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?      5  
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,  
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfiled fears I am ashamed.

For dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men:      10  
And I by my affection was beguiled:

What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

## THE GREEN LINNET<sup>4</sup>

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
With brightest sunshine round me spread

Of spring's unclouded weather,      5  
In this sequestered nook how sweet  
To sit upon my orchard-seat!

And birds and flowers once more to greet,  
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
In all this covert of the bless'd:      10  
Hail to Thee, far above the rest

In joy of voice and pinion!  
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,  
Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May;      15  
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,  
Make all one band of paramours,  
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
Art sole in thy employment:      20

A life, a Presence like the Air,  
Scattering thy gladness without care,  
Too bless'd with any one to pair;  
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,      25  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perched in ecstasies,

Yet seeming still to hover;  
There! where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings      30  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
A Brother of the dancing leaves;  
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves      35  
Pours forth his song in gushes;

As if by that exulting strain  
He mocked and treated with disdain  
The voiceless form he chose to feign,      40  
While fluttering in the bushes.

## STEPPING WESTWARD<sup>5</sup>

"What, you are stepping westward?"—  
"Yea."

—'Twould be a wildish destiny,  
If we, who thus together roam  
In a strange Land, and far from home,  
Were in this place the guests of Chance:      5  
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,  
Though home or shelter he had none,  
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;  
Behind, all gloomy to behold;      10  
And stepping westward seemed to be  
A kind of heavenly destiny:

<sup>1</sup>Written between 1803 and 1805, published in 1807.  
"While my Fellow-traveler and I were walking by the side of  
Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a  
Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably  
entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest  
parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of  
whom said to us, by way of greeting, 'What, you are stepping  
westward?'" (Wordsworth.) Wordsworth, Dorothy, and  
Coleridge went on a tour of Scotland in August, 1803, re-  
turning to Grasmere in the middle of October.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1802 or 1803; published in the latter year in the  
*Morning Post* and in the *Poems* of 1807.

<sup>3</sup>Samuel Daniel, *Civil War*, Bk. II, Stanza 7.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1802 or 1803; published in the latter year in the  
*Morning Post* and in the *Poems* of 1807.

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1803, published in 1807.

I liked the greeting; 'twas a sound  
Of something without place or bound;  
And seemed to give me spiritual right  
To travel through that region bright. 15

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
Was walking by her native lake:  
The salutation had to me  
The very sound of courtesy: 20  
Its power was felt; and while my eye  
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,  
The echo of the voice enwrought  
A human sweetness with the thought  
Of traveling through the world that lay 25  
Before me in my endless way.

### TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND<sup>1</sup>

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower  
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!  
Twice seven consenting years have shed  
Their utmost bounty on thy head:  
And these gray rocks; that household lawn; 5  
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;  
This fall of water that doth make  
A murmur near the silent lake;  
This little bay; a quiet road  
That holds in shelter thy Abode— 10  
In truth together do ye seem  
Like something fashioned in a dream;  
Such Forms as from their covert peep  
When earthly cares are laid asleep!  
But, O fair Creature! in the light 15  
Of common day, so heavenly bright,  
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,  
I bless thee with a human heart;  
God shield thee to thy latest years!  
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers; 20  
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray  
For thee when I am far away:  
For never saw I mien, or face,  
In which more plainly I could trace 25  
Benignity and home-bred sense  
Ripening in perfect innocence.  
Here scattered, like a random seed,  
Remote from men, Thou dost not need  
The embarrassed look of shy distress, 30  
And maidenly shamefacedness:  
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
The freedom of a Mountaineer:  
A face with gladness overspread!  
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred! 35  
And seemliness complete, that sways  
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;  
With no restraint, but such as springs  
From quick and eager visitings

Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach 40  
Of thy few words of English speech:  
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife  
That gives thy gestures grace and life!  
So have I, not unmoved in mind,  
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind— 45  
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull  
For thee who art so beautiful?  
O happy pleasure! here to dwell  
Beside thee in some heathy dell; 50  
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,  
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess!  
But I could frame a wish for thee  
More like a grave reality:  
Thou art to me but as a wave 55  
Of the wild sea; and I would have  
Some claim upon thee, if I could,  
Though but of common neighborhood.  
What joy to hear thee, and to see!  
Thy elder Brother I would be, 60  
Thy Father—anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its grace  
Hath led me to this lovely place.  
Joy have I had; and going hence  
I bear away my recompense. 65  
In spots like these it is we prize  
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:  
Then, why should I be loath to stir?  
I feel this place was made for her;  
To give new pleasure like the past, 70  
Continued long as life shall last.  
Nor am I loath, though pleased at heart,  
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part:  
For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
As fair before me shall behold, 75  
As I do now, the cabin small,  
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;  
And Thee, the Spirit of them all!

### SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT<sup>2</sup>

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair; 5  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and waylay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1803, published in 1807.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1804, published in 1807. The subject of this poem is Mary Hutchinson, Wordsworth's wife.



Her household motions light and free,  
 And steps of virgin-liberty;  
 A countenance in which did meet 15  
 Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
 A Creature not too bright or good  
 For human nature's daily food;  
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles, 19  
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
 The very pulse of the machine;  
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
 A Traveler between life and death;  
 The reason firm, the temperate will, 25  
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
 To warn, to comfort, and command;  
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
 With something of angelic light. 30

THE SOLITARY REAPER<sup>1</sup>

BEHOLD her, single in the field,  
 Yon solitary Highland Lass!  
 Reaping and singing by herself;  
 Stop here, or gently pass!  
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5  
 And sings a melancholy strain;  
 O listen! for the Vale profound  
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt  
 More welcome notes to weary bands 10  
 Of travelers in some shady haunt,  
 Among Arabian sands:  
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
 Breaking the silence of the seas 15  
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—  
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
 And battles long ago: 20  
 Or is it some more humble lay,  
 Familiar matter of to-day?  
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
 That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang 25  
 As if her song could have no ending;  
 I saw her singing at her work,  
 And o'er the sickle bending;—  
 I listened, motionless and still;  
 And, as I mounted up the hill  
 The music in my heart I bore,  
 Long after it was heard no more. 30

YARROW UNVISITED<sup>2</sup>

FROM Stirling castle we had seen  
 The mazy Forth unraveled;  
 Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,  
 And with the Tweed had traveled;  
 And when we came to Clovenford, 5  
 Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"<sup>3</sup>  
 "Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,  
 And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,  
 Who have been buying, selling, 10  
 Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own;  
 Each maiden to her dwelling!  
 On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,  
 Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!  
 But we will downward with the Tweed, 15  
 Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,<sup>4</sup>  
 Both lying right before us;  
 And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed  
 The lintwhites<sup>5</sup> sing in chorus; 20  
 There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land  
 Made blithe with plow and harrow:  
 Why throw away a needful day  
 To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare, 25  
 That glides the dark hills under?  
 There are a thousand such elsewhere  
 As worthy of your wonder."  
 —Strange words they seemed of slight and  
 scorn;  
 My True-love sighed for sorrow; 30  
 And looked me in the face, to think  
 I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"Oh! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,  
 And sweet is Yarrow flowing!  
 Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,<sup>6</sup> 35  
 But we will leave it growing.  
 O'er hilly path, and open Strath,<sup>7</sup>  
 We'll wander Scotland thorough;  
 But, though so near, we will not turn  
 Into the dale of Yarrow. 40

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1803, published in 1807.<sup>3</sup>*I. e.*, Dorothy Wordsworth. The words come from a ballad whose scene is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow. Marrow means, partner.<sup>4</sup>The Gala flows into the Tweed near Abbotsford, and the Leader near Melrose. Haughs (holms) are low-lying lands, occasionally flooded.<sup>5</sup>Linnetts.<sup>6</sup>This line is taken from the ballad called *The Braes of Yarrow* by Hamilton of Bangour—the ballad from which the quoted words in the first stanza also come.<sup>7</sup>A valley through which a river flows.<sup>1</sup>Written between 1803 and 1805, published in 1807.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake  
 The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;  
 The swan on still St. Mary's Lake<sup>1</sup>  
 Float double, swan and shadow!  
 We will not see them; will not go, 45  
 To-day, nor yet to-morrow,  
 Enough if in our hearts we know  
 There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!  
 It must, or we shall rue it: 50  
 We have a vision of our own;  
 Ah! why should we undo it?  
 The treasured dreams of times long past,  
 We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!  
 For when we're there, although 'tis fair, 55  
 'Twill be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come,  
 And wandering seem but folly,—  
 Should we be loath to stir from home,  
 And yet be melancholy; 60  
 Should life be dull, and spirits low,  
 'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,  
 That earth has something yet to show,  
 The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

### I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD<sup>2</sup>

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
 When all at once I saw a crowd,  
 A host, of golden daffodils;  
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees, 5  
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
 And twinkle on the milky way,  
 They stretched in never-ending line  
 Along the margin of a bay: 10  
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
 A poet could not but be gay, 15  
 In such a jocund company:  
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
 What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
 In vacant or in pensive mood, 20

<sup>1</sup>The body of water from which the Yarrow takes its rise.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1804, published in 1807. "The two best lines in it are by Mary. The daffodils grew, and still grow, on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*).

They flash upon that inward eye  
 Which is the bliss of solitude;<sup>3</sup>  
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
 And dances with the daffodils.

### THE SMALL CELANDINE<sup>4</sup>

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,  
 That shrinks, like many more, from cold and  
 rain;  
 And, the first moment that the sun may shine,  
 Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on  
 swarm, 5  
 Or blasts the green field and the trees dis-  
 tressed,  
 Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,  
 In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I  
 passed  
 And recognized it, though an altered form, 10  
 Now standing forth an offering to the blast,  
 And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,  
 "It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:  
 This neither is its courage nor its choice, 15  
 But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;  
 It cannot help itself in its decay;  
 Stiff in its members, withered, changed of  
 hue." 19  
 And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gay.

To be a Prodigal's Favorite—then, worse truth,  
 A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!  
 O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth  
 Age might but take the things Youth needed  
 not! 24

### ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE,  
 IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE  
 BEAUMONT<sup>5</sup>

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile!  
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:<sup>6</sup>  
 I saw thee every day; and all the while  
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

<sup>3</sup>This and the preceding line are those by "Mary"—Mrs. Wordsworth.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1804, published in 1807.

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1805, published in 1807. The Peele Castle here referred to (there are two) is in Lancashire. Wordsworth's friend Beaumont painted two pictures of the Castle, one of them intended for Mrs. Wordsworth.

<sup>6</sup>A reference to a visit paid by Wordsworth during a college vacation to his cousin, Mrs. Barker, who lived at Rampside, not far from Peele Castle.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air! 5  
 So like, so very like, was day to day!  
 Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there;  
 It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no sleep; 9  
 No mood, which season takes away, or brings:  
 I could have fancied that the mighty Deep  
 Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! *then*, if mine had been the Painter's hand,  
 To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,  
 The light that never was, on sea or land; 15  
 The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile  
 Amid a world how different from this!  
 Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;  
 On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss. 20

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house  
 divine  
 Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—  
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine  
 The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease, 25  
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;  
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,  
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart, 29  
 Such Picture would I at that time have made:  
 And seen the soul of truth in every part,  
 A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;  
 I have submitted to a new control: 34  
 A power is gone, which nothing can restore;  
 A deep distress hath humanized my Soul.<sup>1</sup>

Not for a moment could I now behold  
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been:  
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;  
 This, which I know, I speak with mind serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have  
 been the Friend,  
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,  
 This work of thine I blame not, but commend;  
 This sea in anger, and that dismal shore. 44

O 'tis a passionate Work!—yet wise and well,  
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here;  
 That Hulk which labors in the deadly swell,  
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

<sup>1</sup>Wordsworth's brother, Captain John Wordsworth, went down with his ship, an East Indiaman, off the Bill of Portland on 5 February, 1805.

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,  
 I love to see the look with which it braves,  
 Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time, 51  
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,  
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!  
 Such happiness, wherever it be known, 55  
 Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind. *a whole*

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,  
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne!  
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.— 59  
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

ODE TO DUTY<sup>2</sup>

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!  
 O Duty! if that name thou love  
 Who art a light to guide, a rod  
 To check the erring, and reprove;  
 Thou, who art victory and law 5  
 When empty terrors overawe;  
 From vain temptations dost set free;  
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail human-  
 ity!

There are who ask not if thine eye  
 Be on them; who, in love and truth, 10  
 Where no misgiving is, rely  
 Upon the genial sense of youth:  
 Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot;  
 Who do thy work, and know it not:  
 Oh! if through confidence misplaced 15  
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power!  
 around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,  
 And happy will our nature be,  
 When love is an unerring light,  
 And joy its own security. 20  
 And they a blissful course may hold  
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
 Live in the spirit of this creed;  
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried; 25  
 No sport of every random gust,  
 Yet being to myself a guide,  
 Too blindly have reposed my trust:  
 And oft, when in my heart was heard  
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1805, published in 1807. "This ode is on the model of Gray's *Ode to Adversity*" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*).



The task, in smother walks to stray;  
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if  
I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
I supplicate for thy control; 35  
But in the quietness of thought:  
Me this unchartered freedom tires;  
I feel the weight of chance-desires:  
My hopes no more must change their name,  
I long for a repose that ever is the same.<sup>1</sup> 40

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
Nor know we anything so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face:  
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds 45  
And fragrance in thy footing treads;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;  
And the most ancient heavens, through  
Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power! 50  
I call thee: I myself commend  
Unto thy guidance from this hour;  
Oh, let my weakness have an end!  
Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
The spirit of self-sacrifice; 55  
The confidence of reason give;  
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let  
me live!

### CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR<sup>2</sup>

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish to be?  
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought  
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish  
thought: 5

<sup>1</sup>In the edition of 1807 a stanza here followed which was omitted in all later editions:

Yet not the less would I throughout  
Still act according to the voice  
Of my own wish; and feel past doubt  
That my submissiveness was choice:  
Not seeking in the school of pride  
For "precepts over dignified,"  
Denial and restraint I prize  
No farther than they breed a second Will more wise.

<sup>2</sup>Written in December, 1805, or January, 1806; published in 1807. "The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honor of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not

Whose high endeavors are an inward light  
That makes the path before him always  
bright:

Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to  
learn;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there, 10  
But makes his moral being his prime care;  
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,  
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!  
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;  
In face of these doth exercise a power 15  
Which is our human nature's highest dower;  
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, be-  
reaves

Of their bad influence, and their good re-  
ceives:

By objects, which might force the soul to abate  
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate; 20  
Is placable—because occasions rise  
So often that demand such sacrifice;  
More skillful in self-knowledge, even more  
pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,  
As more exposed to suffering and distress;  
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness. 26  
—'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends  
Upon that law as on the best of friends;  
Whence, in a state where men are tempted  
still

To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30  
And what in quality or act is best  
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
He labors good on good to fix, and owes  
To virtue every triumph that he knows:  
—Who, if he rise to station of command, 35  
Rises by open means; and there will stand  
On honorable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire;  
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same  
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim; 40  
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait  
For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;  
Whom they must follow; on whose head must  
fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at all:  
Whose powers shed round him in the common  
strife, 45

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,

been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. . . . I will add that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*). But in 1807 Wordsworth had connected Nelson's name with this poem, in the following note: "The above Verses were written soon after tidings had been received of the death of Lord Nelson, which event directed the Author's thoughts to the subject. His respect for the memory of his great fellow-countryman induces him to mention this; though he is well aware that the Verses must suffer from any connection in the reader's mind with a name so illustrious."

A constant influence, a peculiar grace;  
But who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven has  
joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind, 50  
Is happy as a Lover; and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired;  
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the  
law

In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;  
Or if an unexpected call succeed, 55  
Come when it will, is equal to the need:

—He who, though thus endued as with a sense  
And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes; 60  
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,  
Are at his heart; and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve;  
More brave for this, that he hath much to  
love:—

'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high, 65  
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—  
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—  
Plays, in the many games of life, that one 70  
Where what he most doth value must be won:  
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,  
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;  
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,  
Looks forward, persevering to the last, 75  
From well to better, daily self-surpassed:  
Who, whether praise of him must walk the  
earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,  
And leave a dead unprofitable name— 80  
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;  
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws  
His breath in confidence of Heaven's ap-  
plaus:—

This is the Happy Warrior; this is He  
That every Man in arms should wish to be. 85

### A COMPLAINT<sup>1</sup>

THERE is a change—and I am poor;  
Your love hath been, not long ago,  
A fountain at my fond heart's door,  
Whose only business was to flow;  
And flow it did; not taking heed 5  
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!  
Bless'd was I then all bliss above!

Now, for that consecrated fount  
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love, 10  
What have I? shall I dare to tell?  
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—  
I trust it is,—and never dry:  
What matter? if the waters sleep 15  
In silence and obscurity.  
—Such change, and at the very door  
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

### NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CONVENT'S NARROW ROOM<sup>2</sup>

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room;  
And hermits are contented with their cells;  
And students with their pensive citadels;<sup>3</sup>  
Maidens at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,  
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for  
bloom, 5

High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,<sup>4</sup>  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:  
In truth the prison, into which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me, 9  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound  
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;  
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs  
must be)

Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,  
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

### PERSONAL TALK<sup>5</sup>

#### I

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
To season my fireside with personal talk,—  
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or neighbors, daily, weekly, in my sight:  
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies  
bright, 5  
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the  
stalk,  
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with  
chalk  
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-  
night.

Better than such discourse doth silence long,  
Long, barren silence, square with my desire;  
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim, 11  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,  
And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1807.

<sup>2</sup>Retreats secure for uninterrupted thought.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1806, published in 1807. "Suggested by a change in the manner of a friend" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*). The friend was probably Coleridge.

<sup>4</sup>The hill country east of the Duddon, south of the Brathay, and west of Windermere.

<sup>5</sup>Published in 1807.

## II

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen  
and see,

And with a living pleasure we describe;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.  
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and  
glee

Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."<sup>5</sup>  
Even be it so; yet still among your tribe,  
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me!  
Children are bless'd, and powerful; their  
world lies

More justly balanced; partly at their feet,<sup>10</sup>  
And part far from them:—sweetest melodies  
Are those that are by distance made more  
sweet;

Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,  
He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

## III

Wings have we,—and as far as we can go,  
We may find pleasure: wilderness and wood,  
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
mood

Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books, are each a world; and books,  
we know,<sup>5</sup>

Are a substantial world, both pure and good:  
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh  
and blood,

Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,  
Matter wherein right voluble I am,<sup>10</sup>  
To which I listen with a ready ear;  
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—  
The gentle Lady married to the Moor;<sup>1</sup>  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
Lamb.<sup>2</sup>

## IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote  
From evil-speaking; rancor, never sought,  
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.  
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I<sup>5</sup>  
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joy-  
ous thought:

And thus from day to day my little boat  
Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably.  
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!  
Oh! might my name be numbered among  
theirs,<sup>13</sup>

Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

<sup>1</sup>Desdemona, in *Othello*.

<sup>2</sup>Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Bk. I.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH  
WITH US<sup>3</sup>

THE world is too much with us; late and  
soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
powers:

Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid  
boon!

The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;<sup>5</sup>  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune:  
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;<sup>10</sup>  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less for-  
lorn;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

## ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM REC-  
OLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD<sup>4</sup>

The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

## I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and  
stream,

The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem

Appareled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.<sup>5</sup>  
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—

Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
By night or day,  
The things which I have seen I now can see  
no more.

## II

The Rainbow comes and goes,<sup>10</sup>  
And lovely is the Rose,  
The Moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair;<sup>15</sup>  
The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath passed away a glory from the  
earth.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1807.

<sup>4</sup>Written in the years from 1803, or possibly 1802, to 1806; published in 1807. Concerning the meaning of this poem see the introductory note to Wordsworth's poems, above, where part of the *Fenwick Note* to the *Ode* is quoted.



III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
 And while the young lambs bound 20  
 As to the tabor's<sup>1</sup> sound,  
 To me alone there came a thought of grief:  
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
 And I again am strong:  
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the  
 steep; 25  
 Nor more shall grief of mine the season  
 wrong;<sup>2</sup>  
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains  
 throng,  
 The Winds come to me from the fields of  
 sleep,  
 And all the earth is gay;  
 Land and sea 30  
 Give themselves up to jollity,  
 And with the heart of May  
 Doth every Beast keep holiday;—  
 Thou Child of Joy,  
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,  
 thou happy Shepherd-boy! 35

IV

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call  
 Ye to each other make; I see  
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;  
 My heart is at your festival,  
 My head hath its coronal,<sup>3</sup> 40  
 The fullness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.  
 Oh evil day! if I were sullen  
 While Earth herself is adorning,  
 This sweet May-morning,  
 And the Children are culling 45  
 On every side,  
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,  
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—  
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear! 50  
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
 A single Field which I have looked upon,  
 Both of them speak of something that is  
 gone:  
 The Pansy at my feet  
 Doth the same tale repeat: 55  
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam?  
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting, 60  
 And cometh from afar:  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,

<sup>1</sup>Small drum.

<sup>2</sup>*I. e.*, by lack of sympathy.

<sup>3</sup>Garland.

But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From God, who is our home: 65  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
 Upon the growing Boy,  
 But He beholds the light, and whence it  
 flows,  
 He sees it in his joy; 70  
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
 And by the vision splendid  
 Is on his way attended;  
 At length the Man perceives it die away, 75  
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
 And, even with something of a Mother's  
 mind,  
 And no unworthy aim, 80  
 The homely Nurse doth all she can  
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,  
 Forget the glories he hath known,  
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,  
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size! 86  
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
 With light upon him from his father's eyes!  
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart, 90  
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
 Shaped by himself with newly-learnéd art;  
 A wedding or a festival,  
 A mourning or a funeral;  
 And this hath now his heart, 95  
 And unto this he frames his song:  
 Then will he fit his tongue  
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife;  
 But it will not be long  
 Ere this be thrown aside, 100  
 And with new joy and pride  
 The little Actor cons another part;  
 Filling from time to time his "humorous  
 stage"<sup>4</sup>  
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
 That Life brings with her in her equipage; 105  
 As if his whole vocation  
 Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
 Thy Soul's immensity;

<sup>4</sup>The allusion in these lines is to the speech beginning "All the world's a stage," in *As You Like It*, II, vii. 139-166. Humorous here means, moody.

Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep 110  
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal  
deep,

Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—

Mighty Prophet! Seer bless'd!

On whom those truths do rest, 115  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;  
Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
A Presence which is not to be put by; 120  
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's  
height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou pro-  
voke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?  
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly  
freight, 126

And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

## IX

O joy! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live, 130  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive!  
The thought of our past years in me doth  
breed

Perpetual benediction: not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be bless'd—  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed 136  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his  
breast:—

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise; 140

But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings;

Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realized, 145  
High instincts before which our mortal Na-  
ture

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may, 150

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to  
make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake, 155

To perish never;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,

Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy! 160

Hence in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither,

Can in a moment travel thither, 165

And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!

And let the young Lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound! 170

We in thought will join your throng,

Ye that pipe and ye that play,

Ye that through your hearts to-day

Feel the gladness of the May!

What though the radiance which was once so  
bright 175

Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the  
flower;

We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind; 180

In the primal sympathy

Which having been must ever be;

In the soothing thoughts that spring

Out of human suffering;

In the faith that looks through<sup>1</sup> death, 185

In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and  
Groves,

Forebode not any severing of our loves!

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;

I only have relinquished one delight 190

To live beneath your more habitual sway.

I love the Brooks which down their channels  
fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as  
they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet; 195

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun

Do take a sober coloring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;

Another race hath been, and other palms are  
won. 199

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can  
give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

<sup>1</sup>Beyond.

# THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND<sup>1</sup>

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,  
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:  
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!  
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee     5  
Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly  
striven:  
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art  
driven,  
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:  
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is  
left;     10  
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it  
be  
That Mountain floods should thunder as be-  
fore,  
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee!

## YARROW VISITED SEPTEMBER, 1814<sup>2</sup>

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream  
Of which my fancy cherished,  
So faithfully, a waking dream?  
An image that hath perished!  
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,     5  
To utter notes of gladness,  
And chase this silence from the air,  
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows  
With uncontrolled meanderings;     10  
Nor have these eyes by greener hills  
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.  
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake  
Is visibly delighted;  
For not a feature of those hills     15  
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,  
Save where that pearly whiteness

<sup>1</sup>Written probably in 1807, and published in the same year. Switzerland was conquered by France in 1798. By the time this sonnet was written Napoleon had made himself master of Europe, and England remained his only unconquered opponent.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1814, published in 1815. "I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear Sister was not of the party [which included the Ettrick Shepherd, James Hogg], as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, traveling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*). See *Yarrow Unvisited*, above.

Is round the rising sun diffused,  
A tender hazy brightness;     20  
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes  
All profitless dejection;  
Though not unwilling here to admit  
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower     25  
Of Yarrow Vale<sup>3</sup> lay bleeding?  
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound  
On which the herd is feeding:  
And haply from this crystal pool,  
Now peaceful as the morning,     30  
The Water-wraith ascended thrice  
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings  
The haunts of happy Lovers,  
The path that leads them to the grove,     35  
The leafy grove that covers:  
And Pity sanctifies the Verse  
That paints, by strength of sorrow,  
The unconquerable strength of love;  
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!     40

But thou, that didst appear so fair  
To fond imagination,  
Dost rival in the light of day  
Her delicate creation:  
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,     45  
A softness still and holy;  
The grace of forest charms decayed,  
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds  
Rich groves of lofty stature,     50  
With Yarrow winding through the pomp  
Of cultivated nature;  
And, rising from those lofty groves,  
Behold a Ruin hoary!  
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,<sup>4</sup>     55  
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,  
For sportive youth to stray in;  
For manhood to enjoy his strength;  
And age to wear away in!     60  
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,  
A covert for protection  
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—  
The brood of chaste affection.

<sup>3</sup>The "real" Flower of Yarrow was Mary Scott of Dryhope, but Wordsworth's allusion is to Logan's ballad, *The Braes of Yarrow*, in which the lady laments her dead lover as the "flower of Yarrow," and in which

"Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,  
And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow."

<sup>4</sup>About three miles from Selkirk.



How sweet, on this autumnal day,  
The wild-wood fruits to gather,  
And on my True-love's forehead plant  
A crest of blooming heather!  
And what if I enwreathed my own!  
'Twere no offense to reason;  
The sober Hills thus deck their brows  
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,  
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;  
A ray of fancy still survives—  
Her sunshine plays upon thee!  
Thy ever-youthful waters keep  
A course of lively pleasure;  
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,  
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the Heights,  
They melt, and soon must vanish;  
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—  
Sad thought which I would banish,  
But that I know, where'er I go,  
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!  
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,  
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

### LAODAMIA<sup>1</sup>

"WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;  
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn  
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I re-  
quired:  
Celestial pity I again implore;—  
Restore him to my sight—great Jove, re-  
store!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed  
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts  
her hands;  
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,  
Her countenance brightens—and her eye ex-  
pands;  
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature  
grows;  
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived?—O joy!  
What doth she look on?—whom doth she be-  
hold?  
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?  
His vital presence? his corporeal mold?

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1814, published in 1815. "The incident of the trees growing and withering [mentioned in the concluding lines of the poem] put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given to it by any of the Ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*).

65 It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He!  
And a God leads him, wingéd Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with  
his wand  
70 That calms all fear; "Such grace hath crowned  
thy prayer,  
Laodamia! that at Jove's command  
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air:  
He comes to tarry with thee three hours'  
space;  
75 Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord  
to clasp;  
25 Again that consummation she essayed;  
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
80 As often as that eager grasp was made.  
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,  
And re-assume his place before her sight. 30

"Protesiláus, lo! thy guide is gone!  
85 Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:  
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne;  
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will re-  
joice.  
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed 35  
This precious boon; and blessed a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia! doth not leave  
His gifts imperfect:—Specter though I be,  
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;  
But in reward of thy fidelity. 40  
And something also did my worth obtain;  
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold  
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan  
strand  
Should die; but me the threat could not with-  
hold: 45  
A generous cause a victim did demand;  
And forth I leaped upon the sandy plain;  
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest, best!  
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more, 50  
Which then, when tens of thousands were de-  
pressed  
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;  
Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here thou  
art—  
A nobler counselor than my poor heart. 54

"But thou, though capable of sternest deed,  
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;  
And he, whose power restores thee, hath  
decreed  
Thou shouldst elude the malice of the grave:  
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair 59  
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

"No Specter greets me,—no vain Shadow this;  
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!  
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial  
kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"  
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious Parcae<sup>1</sup>  
threw 65  
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:  
Nor should the change be mourned, even if  
the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast  
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys  
Those raptures duly—Erebus<sup>2</sup> disdains: 71  
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control  
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;  
A fervent, not ungovernable, love. 76  
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn  
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—"

"Ah, wherefore?—Did not Hercules by force  
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb  
Alcestis, a reanimated corse, 81  
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?<sup>3</sup>  
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,  
And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.<sup>4</sup>

"The Gods to us are merciful—and they 85  
Yet further may relent: for mightier far  
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway  
Of magic potent over sun and star,  
Is love, though oft to agony distressed,  
And though his favorite seat be feeble  
woman's breast. 90

"But if thou goest, I follow—" "Peace!"  
he said,—  
She looked upon him and was calmed and  
cheered;  
The ghastly color from his lips had fled;  
In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared  
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace, 95  
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;  
No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—  
The past unsighed for, and the future sure; 100  
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood  
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there  
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,

<sup>1</sup>Fates. <sup>2</sup>Hades.

<sup>3</sup>This is the theme of the *Alcestis* of Euripides.

<sup>4</sup>See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII, 159–293. Æson was the father of Jason.

An ampler ether, a diviner air, 105  
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;  
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest  
day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath  
earned

That privilege by virtue.—"Ill," said he, 110  
"The end of man's existence I discerned,  
Who from ignoble games and revelry  
Could draw, when we had parted, vain de-  
light,

While tears were thy best pastime, day and  
night; 114

"And while my youthful peers before my eyes  
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise  
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,  
Chieftains and kings in council were detained;  
What time the fleet at Aulis<sup>5</sup> lay enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given:—I then re-  
volved 121

The oracle, upon the silent sea;  
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved  
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be  
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—  
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan  
sand. 126

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife!  
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—  
The paths which we had trod—these foun-  
tains, flowers, 131  
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,  
'Behold they tremble!—haughty their array,  
Yet of their number no one dares to die?' 135  
In soul I swept the indignity away:  
Old frailties then recurred:—but lofty  
thought,  
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all too  
weak  
In reason, in self-government too slow; 140  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek  
Our bless'd re-union in the shades below.  
The invisible world with thee hath sym-  
pathized;  
Be thy affections raised and solemnized. 144

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—  
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,

<sup>5</sup>A port in Bœotia. There the Greek fleet was held until Iphigenia was sacrificed to appease Artemis.

Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;  
 For this the passion to excess was driven—  
 That self might be annulled: her bondage  
 prove 149  
 The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”—

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-appears!  
 Round the dear Shade she would have clung  
 —’tis vain:

The hours are past—too brief had they been  
 years;

And him no mortal effort can detain:  
 Swift, toward the realms that know not  
 earthly day, 155

He through the portal takes his silent way,  
 And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,  
 She perished; and, as for a willful crime, 159  
 By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved,  
 Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,  
 Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers  
 Of blissful quiet ’mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due;  
 And mortal hopes defeated and o’erthrown 165  
 Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,  
 As fondly he believes.—Upon the side  
 Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)  
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew 169  
 From out the tomb of him for whom she died;  
 And ever, when such stature they had gained  
 That Ilium’s walls were subject to their view,  
 The trees’ tall summits withered at the sight,  
 A constant interchange of growth and blight!

#### AFTER—THOUGHT, AP- PENDED TO *THE RIVER* *DUDDON*<sup>1</sup>

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
 As being passed away.—Vain sympathies!  
 For, backward, Duddon, as I cast my eyes,  
 I see what was, and is, and will abide; 4  
 Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide,  
 The Form remains, the Function never dies,  
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,  
 We Men, who in our morn of youth defied  
 The elements, must vanish,—be it so!  
 Enough, if something from our hands have  
 power 10  
 To live, and act, and serve the future hour,  
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
 Through love, through hope, and faith’s  
 transcendent dower,  
 We feel that we are greater than we know.

#### MUTABILITY<sup>2</sup>

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
 And sink from high to low, along a scale  
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;  
 A musical but melancholy chime,  
 Which they can hear who meddle not with  
 crime, 5  
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.  
 Truth fails not; but her outward forms that  
 bear  
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain  
 And is no more; drop like the tower sublime 10  
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain  
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,  
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

#### INSIDE OF KING’S COL- LEGE CHAPEL, CAM- BRIDGE<sup>3</sup>

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,  
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who  
 planned—  
 Albeit laboring for a scanty band  
 Of white robed Scholars only—this immense  
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence! 5  
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the  
 lore  
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;  
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense  
 These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof  
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand  
 cells, 10  
 Where light and shade repose, where music  
 dwells  
 Linger— and wandering on as loath to die;  
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth  
 proof  
 That they were born for immortality.

#### THE SAME

WHAT awful perspective! while from our sight  
 With gradual stealth the lateral windows hide  
 Their Portraitures, their stone-work glimmers,  
 dyed  
 In the soft checkerings of a sleepy light.  
 Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremit, 5  
 Whoe’er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,  
 Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,

<sup>2</sup>This and the three following sonnets are from *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, published in 1822. Most of the sonnets in the series were written in 1821.

<sup>3</sup>The College was founded (in 1441) and the chapel built by Henry VI, who was never actually canonized but who was worshiped as a martyr and saint. The scholars for whom the Chapel was built were clerks of St. Nicholas.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1820. This is the final sonnet of a series entitled *The River Duddon*. This stream rises on the borders of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire, and flows between the latter two counties into the Irish Sea.



Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night!—  
But, from the arms of silence—list! O list!  
The music bursteth into second life; 10  
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed  
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife;  
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the eye  
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy!

## CONTINUED

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home  
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of  
fear

Or groveling thought, to seek a refuge here;  
Or through the aisles of Westminster<sup>1</sup> to roam:  
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam  
Melts, if it cross the threshold; where the  
wreath 6

Of awe-struck wisdom droops: or let my path  
Lead to that younger Pile,<sup>2</sup> whose sky-like  
dome

Hath typified by reach of daring art  
Infinity's embrace; whose guardian crest, 10  
The silent Cross, among the stars shall spread  
As now, when She hath also seen her breast  
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part  
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

## TO—— 3 •

O DEARER far than light and life are dear,  
Full oft our human foresight I deplore;  
Trembling, through my unworthiness, with  
fear

That friends, by death disjoined, may meet no  
more!

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control, 5  
Mix with the day, and cross the hour of rest;  
While all the future, for thy purer soul,  
With "sober certainties"<sup>4</sup> of love is bless'd.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human ear,  
Tells that these words thy humbleness offend;  
Yet bear me up—else faltering in the rear 11  
Of a steep march: support me to the end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,  
And Love is dutiful in thought and deed;  
Through Thee communion with that Love  
I seek: 15  
The faith Heaven strengthens where *he* molds  
the Creed.

<sup>1</sup>Westminster Abbey.

<sup>2</sup>St. Paul's Cathedral, built in the seventeenth century by Sir Christopher Wren.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1824, published in 1827. Addressed to Mrs. Wordsworth.

<sup>4</sup>Comus, l. 264.

TO A SKYLARK<sup>5</sup>

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares  
abound?  
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye  
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?  
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will, 5  
Those quivering wings composed, that music  
still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;  
A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood  
Of harmony, with instinct more divine; 10  
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and  
Home!

\*SCORN NOT THE SONNET<sup>6</sup>

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
frowned,

Mindless of its just honors; with this key  
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
wound;<sup>7</sup>

A thousand times this pipe did Tasso<sup>8</sup> sound; 5  
With it Camöens<sup>9</sup> soothed an exile's grief;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His visionary brow;<sup>10</sup> a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser,<sup>11</sup> called from Faery-  
land 10

To struggle through dark ways; and, when a  
damp *chindusa*

Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he blew  
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

YARROW REVISITED<sup>12</sup>

The gallant Youth, who may have gained,  
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"<sup>13</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1825, published in 1827. <sup>6</sup>Published in 1827.

<sup>7</sup>In his series of sonnets inspired by Laura. Petrarch (1304–1374) was a humanist and poet of the Italian Renaissance.

<sup>8</sup>Italian poet (1544–1595).

<sup>9</sup>Portuguese poet (1524–1580).

<sup>10</sup>Many of Dante's sonnets are to be found in his *Vita Nuova*.

<sup>11</sup>Spenser's series of sonnets is entitled *Amoretti*.

<sup>12</sup>Written in 1831, published in 1835. "In the autumn of 1831, my daughter and I set off from Rydal to visit Sir Walter Scott before his departure for Italy. . . . How sadly changed did I find him from the man I had seen so healthy, gay, and hopeful, a few years before. . . . On Tuesday morning Sir Walter Scott accompanied us and most of the party to Newark Castle on the Yarrow. When we alighted from the carriages he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting those his favorite haunts. Of that occasion the verses *Yarrow Revisited* are a memorial" (Wordsworth, *Fenwick Note*).

<sup>13</sup>See *Yarrow Unvisited* and *Yarrow Visited*, above.

- Was but an Infant in the lap  
When first I looked on Yarrow;  
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate 5  
Long left without a warder,  
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,  
Great Minstrel of the Border!
- Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,  
Their dignity installing 10  
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves  
Were on the bough, or falling;  
But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed—  
The forest to embolden;  
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot 15  
Transparence through the golden.
- For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on  
In foamy agitation;  
And slept in many a crystal pool  
For quiet contemplation: 20  
No public and no private care  
The freeborn mind enthralling,  
We made a day of happy hours,  
Our happy days recalling.
- Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of youth, 25  
With freaks of graceful folly,—  
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,  
Her Night not melancholy;  
Past, present, future, all appeared  
In harmony united, 30  
Like guests that meet, and some from far,  
By cordial love invited.
- And if, as Yarrow, through the woods  
And down the meadow ranging,  
Did meet us with unaltered face, 35  
Though we were changed and changing;  
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread  
Our inward prospect over,  
The soul's deep valley was not slow  
Its brightness to recover. 40
- Eternal blessings on the Muse,  
And her divine employment!  
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons  
For hope and calm enjoyment;  
Albeit sickness, lingering yet, 45  
Has o'er their pillow brooded;  
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite  
Not easily eluded.
- For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change  
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot  
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;  
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot 50
- For mild Sorento's breezy waves;  
May classic Fancy, linking  
With native Fancy her fresh aid, 55  
Preserve thy heart from sinking!
- Oh! while they minister to thee,  
Each vying with the other,  
May Health return to mellow Age  
With Strength, her venturous brother; 60  
And Tiber, and each brook and rill  
Renowned in song and story,  
With unimagined beauty shine,  
Nor lose one ray of glory!
- For Thou, upon a hundred streams, 65  
By tales of love and sorrow,  
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,  
Hast shed the power of Yarrow;  
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,  
Wherever they invite Thee, 70  
At parent Nature's grateful call,  
With gladness must requite Thee.
- A gracious welcome shall be thine,  
Such looks of love and honor  
As thy own Yarrow gave to me 75  
When first I gazed upon her;  
Beheld what I had feared to see,  
Unwilling to surrender  
Dreams treasured up from early days,  
The holy and the tender. 80
- And what, for this frail world, were all  
That mortals do or suffer,  
Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
Memorial tribute offer? 85  
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?  
Her features, could they win us,  
Unhelped by the poetic voice  
That hourly speaks within us?
- Nor deem that localized Romance  
Plays false with our affections; 90  
Unsantifies our tears—made sport  
For fanciful dejections:  
Ah, no! the visions of the past  
Sustain the heart in feeling  
Life as she is—our changeful Life, 95  
With friends and kindred dealing.
- Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day  
In Yarrow's groves were centered;  
Who through the silent portal arch  
Of moldering Newark entered; 100  
And clomb the winding stair that once  
Too timidly was mounted  
By the "last Minstrel,"<sup>1</sup> (not the last!)  
Ere he his Tale recounted.

<sup>1</sup>See Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, ll. 31–32.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream! 105  
 Fulfill thy pensive duty,  
 Well pleased that future Bards should chant  
 For simple hearts thy beauty;  
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
 Dear to the common sunshine, 110  
 And dearer still, as now I feel,  
 To memory's shadowy moonshine!

THE TROSACHS<sup>1</sup>

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
 But were an apt confessional for One  
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn  
 gone,  
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass  
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art which  
 chase 5  
 That thought away, turn, and with watchful  
 eyes  
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear  
 than glass  
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy  
 quest,  
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray 10  
 (October's workmanship to rival May)  
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,  
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1831, published in 1835 (No. VI of the series entitled *Yarrow Revisited*). The Trosachs is a wooded valley in Perthshire.

MOST SWEET IT IS WITH  
UNUPLIFTED EYES<sup>2</sup>

MOST sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,  
 While a fair region round the traveler lies  
 Which he forbears again to look upon;  
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene, 5  
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
 Of meditation, slipping in between  
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day  
 Let us break off all commerce with the Muse:  
 With Thought and Love companions of our  
 way, 11  
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her  
 dews  
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

IF THIS GREAT WORLD  
OF JOY AND PAIN<sup>3</sup>

IF THIS great world of joy and pain  
 Revolve in one sure track;  
 If freedom, set, will rise again,  
 And virtue, flown, come back;  
 Woe to the purblind crew who fill 5  
 The heart with each day's care;  
 Nor gain, from past or future, skill  
 To bear, and to forbear!

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1833, published in 1835.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1833, published in 1835.



## SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772-1834)

Coleridge, the son of a clergyman of the Church of England, was born at Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, on 21 October, 1772. His early childhood clearly foreshadowed his later development. "I read," he says, speaking of his boyhood, "every book that came in my way without distinction; and my father was fond of me, and used to take me on his knee, and hold long conversations with me. I remember, when eight years old, walking with him one winter's evening from a farmer's house, a mile from Ottery; and he then told me the names of the stars, and how Jupiter was a thousand times larger than our world, and that the other twinkling stars were suns that had worlds rolling round them; and when I came home he showed me how they rolled round. I heard him with a profound delight and admiration, but without the least mixture of wonder or incredulity. For from my early reading of fairy tales and about geni, and the like, my mind had been habituated to *the Vast*; and I never regarded my *senses* in any way as the *criteria* of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my sight, even at that age." Coleridge, in other words, was born with a sense of immaterial reality, and this he never lost. From 1782 until 1790 he was at Christ's Hospital, where began his lifelong friendship with Charles Lamb. And as Lamb later sketched his school-fellow we see still the same Coleridge who as a boy of eight regulated his creeds by his conceptions, not by his sight: "Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration . . . to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar—while the walls of the old Gray Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy!*" From Christ's Hospital Coleridge proceeded to Jesus College, Cambridge. There he became a radical in politics, as a result of ardor for the French Revolution, continued to read everything he could lay hands on—including notably Hartley's *Observations*, which converted him to necessitarianism for a time—accumulated debts, and suffered disappointment in love. Then after two years of Cambridge he suddenly en-

listed in a regiment of dragoons, but found inside of four months that a soldier's life was not for him. Consequently he went back to Cambridge, but began also to plan, with Robert Southey, then a student at Oxford, the foundation of an ideal community along the banks of the Susquehanna in America. The plan, of course, fell through, but it did result in the marriage of Coleridge and Southey to the two Miss Frickers, who were to have been fellow-members of the American Pantisocracy. Coleridge's marriage proved unhappy. His would have been a difficult nature in any household, and it was doubtless the more so in one ill-provided with money. In later years he lived apart from his wife and children.

In 1796 Coleridge met Wordsworth, and each made a profound impression on the other. In the following year they were much together, and there opened for both of them the period when their greatest poetry was written. In his *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge has written of these early days of friendship, and, at the same time, in his discussion of Wordsworth's poetry and poetical theory, has left us the best example we have of his critical genius and methods. He has also told how Wordsworth and he coöperated in writing the *Lyrical Ballads*. As he says, Wordsworth's industry proved greater than his, so that the book appeared in 1798 with only four poems by Coleridge—though one of these was *The Ancient Mariner*, a contribution sufficiently notable for its quality to atone for many failures in industry. In the same year Coleridge and Wordsworth went to Germany, the former to study philosophy, and to find in German Transcendentalism the confirmation of much of his own earlier thought. Philosophy and religion had always been major interests with Coleridge, and after 1800 his attention was more and more absorbed into the effort to lay a solid philosophic foundation for Christian belief. In the early years of the new century, however, he became the victim of opium, which in the course of time so undermined his health and character that he grew unfit for prolonged and steady work. To the end of his life he never ceased forming vast projects, and he apparently continued to believe that he was at least making progress towards the completion of his great philosophic reconstitution of Christianity, but neither this—the most famous unwritten book in English literature, as it has been called—nor other books ever saw the light. Some

things were written, the essays composing *The Friend* (1809-1810), many articles for newspapers, *The Statesman's Manual* (1816), the *Biographia Literaria* (1817), *Aids to Reflection* (1825), *On the Constitution of the Church and State* (1830), and *The Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit* (not published until 1840), but these were fragments only in comparison with what Coleridge thought he could do, and in comparison with what he might have done had he been more happily constituted.

LOVE<sup>1</sup>

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his sacred flame.

Of in my waking dreams do I  
Live o'er again that happy hour,  
When midway on the mount I lay,  
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene  
Had blended with the lights of eve;  
And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the arméd man,  
The statue of the arméd knight;  
She stood and listened to my lay,  
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own.  
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!  
She loves me best, whene'er I sing  
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song, that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
For well she knew, I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
Interpreted my own.

In 1816 Coleridge was taken into the household of Dr. James Gillman of Highgate, and there he continued to live until his death on 25 July, 1834. Under Gillman's care he was partially cured of the opium habit, and his last years were years of comparative peace. They were also years in which Coleridge was regarded as little less than an oracle by a group of younger disciples who gathered round him at Highgate to hear his copious floods of extraordinary talk.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;  
And she forgave me, that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade,  
And sometimes starting up at once,  
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright;  
And that he knew it was a Fiend,  
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than death  
The Lady of the Land!

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;  
And how she tended him in vain—  
And ever strove to expiate  
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest-leaves  
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
My faltering voice and pausing harp  
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;  
The music and the doleful tale,  
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
An undistinguishable throng,  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
Subdued and cherished long!

<sup>1</sup>First printed in 1799; written in that or the preceding year.

She wept with pity and delight,  
 She blushed with love, and virgin-shame;  
 And like the murmur of a dream,  
 I heard her breathe my name. 80

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,  
 As conscious of my look she stepped—  
 Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
 She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms, 85  
 She pressed me with a meek embrace;  
 And bending back her head, looked up,  
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
 And partly 'twas a bashful art, 90  
 That I might rather feel, than see,  
 The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
 And told her love with virgin pride;  
 And so I won my Genevieve, 95  
 My bright and beauteous Bride.

### KUBLA KHAN<sup>1</sup>

IN XANADU did Kubla Khan  
 A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
 Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
 Through caverns measureless to man  
 Down to a sunless sea. 5  
 So twice five miles of fertile ground  
 With walls and towers were girdled round:

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1797 or 1798, published in 1816. In a preface (written in the third person) Coleridge explains its composition: "In consequence of a slight indisposition an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchas's Pilgrimage*: 'Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall.' The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; . . . On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and, taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business . . . and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away." Kubla Khan lived in the thirteenth century and was the founder of the Mongol dynasty in China. Khan, sometimes written Cham, is equivalent to "King." Xanadu (the form is Zaindu in *Purchas*) is a region in Tartary.

And here were gardens bright with sinuous  
 rills  
 Where blossomed many an incense-bearing  
 tree,  
 And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10  
 Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which  
 slanted  
 Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
 A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
 As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
 By woman wailing for her demon-lover! 16  
 And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil  
 seething,  
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were breath-  
 ing,  
 A mighty fountain momentarily was forced,  
 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20  
 Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
 Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:  
 And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and  
 ever

It flung up momentarily the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion 25  
 Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
 Then reached the caverns measureless to man,  
 And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
 And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
 Ancestral voices prophesying war! 30

"The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
 Floated midway on the waves;  
 Where was heard the mingled measure  
 From the fountain and the caves.  
 It was a miracle of rare device, 35  
 A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice! "

A damsel with a dulcimer  
 In a vision once I saw:  
 It was an Abyssinian maid,  
 And on her dulcimer she played, 40  
 Singing of Mount Abora.<sup>2</sup>  
 Could I revive within me  
 Her symphony and song,  
 To such a deep delight 'twould win me,  
 That with music loud and long, 45  
 I would build that dome in air,  
 That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
 And all who heard should see them there,  
 And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair! 50  
 Weave a circle round him thrice,  
 And close your eyes with holy dread,  
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

<sup>2</sup>Professor Lane Cooper has suggested that this is a variant of Amara, the name of a mountain in Abyssinia on which, according to tradition, there was a terrestrial paradise like that of the Khan Kubla.



THE RIME OF THE  
ANCIENT MARINER<sup>1</sup>

## IN SEVEN PARTS

## ARGUMENT

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

## PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
"By thy long gray beard and  
glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide, 5  
And I am next of kin;  
The guests are met, the feast is set:  
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
"There was a ship," quoth he. 10  
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"  
Eftsoons<sup>2</sup> his hand dropped he.

He holds him with his glittering  
eye—  
The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
And listens like a three years'  
child:  
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone: 17  
He cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner. 20

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top. 24

"The sun came up upon the  
left,  
Out of the sea came he!  
And he shone bright, and on the  
right  
Went down into the sea. 25

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

"Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon—" 30  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the  
hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her  
goes  
The merry minstrelsy. 36

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner. 40

"And now the Storm-blast came,  
and he  
Was tyrannous and strong:  
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

"With sloping masts and dipping prow, 45  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,  
And southward aye we fled. 50

"And now there came both mist and snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold:  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald. 54

"And through the drifts the  
snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen:  
Nor shapes of men nor beasts  
we ken—  
The ice was all between.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around: 60  
It cracked and growled, and roared and  
howled,  
Like noises in a swound!

<sup>1</sup>Written 1797-1798, published 1798. Many changes were made for the 2nd edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800. The marginal gloss was added in 1815-1816, and was first published in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817, when, also, the poem first appeared under Coleridge's name. In 1843 Wordsworth said that "much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention," but that he had made certain suggestions, including the killing of the albatross as the crime which was wanted, to bring upon the Mariner the spectral persecution. Then and previously Wordsworth also said that he had contributed a few lines to the poem; and he told Alexander Dyce, in 1835 or 1836, that he had written one complete stanza (ll. 13-16).

<sup>2</sup>At once.

"At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the fog it came;  
As if it had been a Christian  
soul, 65  
We hailed it in God's name.

Till a great  
sea-bird,  
called the  
Albatross,  
came through  
the snow-fog,  
and was re-  
ceived with  
great joy and  
hospitality.

"It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
And round and round it flew.  
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
The helmsman steered us through! 70

"And a good south wind sprung  
up behind;  
The Albatross did follow,  
And every day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariner's hollo!

And lo! the  
Albatross  
proveth a bird  
of good omen,  
and followeth  
the ship as it  
returned  
northward  
through fog  
and floating  
ice.

"In mist or cloud, on mast or  
shroud,  
It perched for vespers nine;  
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke  
white, 76  
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

"God save thee, ancient Mar-  
iner!  
From the fiends, that plague thee  
thus!—  
Why look'st thou so?"—"With  
my cross-bow 81  
I shot the Albatross!"

The ancient  
Mariner  
inhospitably  
killeth the  
pious bird of  
good omen.

## PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right:  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left 85  
Went down into the sea.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,  
But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day for food or play  
Came to the mariner's hollo! 90

"And I had done a hellish thing,  
And it would work 'em woe:  
For all averred, I had killed the  
bird  
That made the breeze to blow.  
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay, 95  
That made the breeze to blow!

His shipmates  
cry out against  
the ancient  
Mariner, for  
killing the bird  
of good luck.

"Nor dim nor red, like God's  
own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist:  
Then all averred, I had killed  
the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.

But when the  
fog cleared off  
they justify  
the same, and  
thus make  
themselves ac-  
complices in  
the crime.

'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist. 102

"The fair breeze blew, the white  
foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea. The fair breeze  
continues; the  
ship enters the  
Pacific Ocean,  
and sails north-  
ward, even till  
it reaches the  
Line.

"Down dropped the breeze, the  
sails dropped down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea! 110

The ship hath  
been suddenly  
becalmed.

"All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

"Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean. 115

"Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink. 121

And the Alba-  
tross begins to  
be avenged.

"The very deep did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea. 125

"About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burned green, and blue and white. 130

"And some in dreams assured were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;  
Nine fathom deep he had fol-  
lowed us  
From the land of mist and snow. A Spirit had  
followed them;  
one of the in-  
visible inhab-  
itants of this  
planet, neither

departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew,  
Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael  
Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and  
there is no climate or element without one or more.

"And every tongue, through utter drought,  
Was withered at the root;  
We could not speak, no more  
than if  
We had been choked with soot. 136

The shipmates,  
in their sore  
distress, would  
fain throw the  
whole guilt on  
the ancient  
Mariner: in  
sign whereof  
they hang the  
dead sea-bird  
round his  
neck.

"Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young!  
Instead of the cross, the Alba-  
tross 141  
About my neck was hung.

## PART III

"There passed a weary time. Each throat  
Was parched, and glazed each eye.  
A weary time! a weary time!  
How glazed each weary eye,  
When looking westward, I be-  
held  
A something in the sky.

145

The ancient  
Mariner be-  
holdeth a sign  
in the element  
afar off.

"At first it seemed a little speck,  
And then it seemed a mist;  
It moved and moved, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.<sup>1</sup>

150

"A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist! *Saw*  
And still it neared and neared:  
As if it dodged a water-sprite,  
It plunged and tacked and veered.

155

"With throats unslaked, with  
black lips baked,  
We could nor laugh nor wail;  
Through utter drought all dumb  
we stood!  
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,  
And cried, A sail! a sail!

At its nearer  
approach, it  
seemeth him  
to be a ship;  
and at a dear  
ransom he  
freeth his  
speech from  
the bonds of  
thirst.

"With throats unslaked, with black lips  
baked,  
Agape they heard me call:  
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,<sup>2</sup>  
And all at once their breath  
drew in,  
As they were drinking all.

162

A flash of joy;

"See! see! (I cried) she tacks no  
more!  
Hither to work us weal;  
Without a breeze, without a  
tide,  
She steadies with upright keel!

170

And horror  
follows. For  
can it be a ship  
that comes  
onward with-  
out wind or  
tide?

"The western wave was all aflame,  
The day was well nigh done!  
Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad bright Sun;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.

175

"And straight the Sun was  
flecked with bars,  
(Heaven's Mother send us  
grace!)

It seemeth him  
but the skele-  
ton of a ship.

<sup>1</sup>Knew.

<sup>2</sup>"I took the thought of *grinning for joy* . . . from my companion's remark to me, when we had climbed to the top of Minlimmon, and were nearly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction, till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me, 'You grinned like an idiot!' He had done the same." (Coleridge, *Table Talk*, 31 May, 1830.)

As if through a dungeon-grate he peered  
With broad and burning face.

180

"Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she nears and nears!  
Are those *her* sails that glance in  
the Sun,  
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are  
seen as bars on  
the face of the  
setting Sun.

"Are those *her* ribs through which the Sun  
Did peer, as through a grate?  
And is that Woman all her crew?  
Is that a Death? and are there  
two?  
Is death that woman's mate?

The Specter-  
Woman and  
her Death-  
mate, and no  
other on board  
the skeleton-  
ship.

"*Her* lips were red, *her* looks were free,  
*Her* locks were yellow as gold:  
*Her* skin was as white as leprosy,  
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,  
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

194

Like vessel,  
like crew!

"The naked hulk alongside came,  
And the twain were casting dice;  
'The game is done! I've won,  
I've won!'  
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

Death and  
Life-in-Death  
have diced for  
the ship's  
crew, and she  
(the latter)  
winneeth the  
ancient  
Mariner.

"The Sun's rim dips; the stars  
rush out:  
At one stride comes the dark;  
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
Off shot the specter-bark.

201

No twilight  
within the  
courts of the  
Sun.

"We listened and looked side-  
ways up!  
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
My life-blood seemed to sip!  
The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed  
white;  
From the sails the dew did drip—  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The hornèd Moon with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.

205

At the rising  
of the Moon,

"One after one, by the star-  
dogged Moon,  
Too quick for groan or sigh,  
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
And cursed me with his eye.

215

One after an-  
other,

"Four times fifty living men  
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
They dropped down one by one.

219

His shipmates  
drop down  
dead.



"The souls did from their bodies  
fly—  
They fled to bliss or woe!  
And every soul, it passed me by,  
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

## PART IV

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!  
I fear thy skinny hand!  
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is talking to him.

227

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,  
And thy skinny hand, so brown."

"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!  
This body dropped not down.

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

235

"The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm

239

"I looked upon the rotting sea,  
And drew my eyes away;  
I looked upon the rotting deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;  
But or ever a prayer had gushed,  
A wicked whisper came, and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

245

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
And the balls like pulses beat;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,  
Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.

250

"The cold sweat melted from their limbs,  
Nor rot nor reek did they:  
The look with which they looked on me  
Had never passed away.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

255

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
A spirit from on high;  
But oh! more horrible than that  
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!  
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,  
And yet I could not die.

260

"The moving Moon went up the sky,  
And nowhere did abide:  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside—

In his loneliness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country

265

"Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,  
Like April hoar-frost spread;  
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
The charmed water burned away  
A still and awful red.

and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

"Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes:  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

275

"Within the shadow of the ship  
I watched their rich attire:  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire.

280

"O happy living things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:  
A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
And I blessed them unaware;  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

Their beauty and their happiness.

284

He bleaseth them in his heart.

The spell begins to break.

"The selfsame moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea."

290

## PART V

"Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole!  
To Mary Queen the praise be given!  
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
That slid into my soul.

295

"The silly<sup>1</sup> buckets on the deck,  
That had so long remained,  
I dreamt that they were filled  
with dew;  
And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

<sup>1</sup>What meaning Coleridge intended the word to have here it is not easy to say. The buckets were not fulfilling the purpose for which they were made: perhaps he meant that this made them look "silly."

"My lips were wet, my throat was cold, 301  
My garments all were dank;  
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
And still my body drank.

"I moved, and could not feel my limbs: 305  
I was so light—almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessed ghost.

"And soon I heard a roaring He heareth  
sounds and  
seeth strange  
sights and  
commotions in  
the sky and  
the element.  
wind: 310  
It did not come anear;  
But with its sound it shook the  
sails,  
That were so thin and sere.

"The upper air burst into life!  
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,<sup>1</sup>  
To and fro they were hurried about! 315  
And to and fro, and in and out,  
The wan stars danced between.

"And the coming wind did roar more loud,  
And the sails did sigh like sedge;<sup>2</sup>  
And the rain poured down from one black  
cloud; 320  
The Moon was at its edge.

"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
The Moon was at its side:  
Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag, 325  
A river steep and wide.

"The loud wind never reached The bodies of  
the ship's crew  
are inspired,  
and the ship  
moves on;  
the ship,  
Yet now the ship moved on!  
Beneath the lightning and the  
Moon  
The dead men gave a groan. 330

"They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,  
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;  
It had been strange, even in a dream,  
To have seen those dead men rise.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;  
Yet never a breeze up blew; 336  
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
Where they were wont to do;  
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—  
We were a ghastly crew. 340

"The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me, knee to knee:  
The body and I pulled at one rope,  
But he said nought to me." 344

<sup>1</sup>Bright.

<sup>2</sup>Swamp-grass, which "sighs" in the wind.

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"  
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!  
'Twas not those souls that fled in  
pain,  
Which to their corse came again,  
But a troop of spirits blest:  
But not by the  
souls of the  
men, nor by  
demons of  
earth or mid-  
dle air, but by  
a blessed troop  
of angelic  
spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

"For when it dawned—they dropped their  
arms, 350  
And clustered round the mast;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their  
mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

"Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun; 355  
Slowly the sounds come back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

"Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing;  
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute;  
And now it is an angel's song, 365  
That makes the heavens be mute.

"It ceased; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June, 370  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe:  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375  
Moved onward from beneath.

"Under the keel nine fathom The lonesome  
Spirit from the  
south-pole car-  
ries on the ship  
as far as the  
Line, in obedi-  
ence to the  
angelic troop,  
but still  
requireth ven-  
geance.  
deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid; and it was he  
That made the ship to go. 380  
The sails at noon left off their  
tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fixed her to the ocean;  
But in a minute she 'gan stir, 385  
With a short uneasy motion—  
Backwards and forwards half her length,  
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound: 390  
It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.

"How long in that same fit I lay, The Polar Spirit's fel-  
I have not to declare; 394 low-demons,  
But ere my living life returned, the invisible  
I heard, and in my soul discerned inhabitants of  
Two voices in the air. the element,  
two of them relate one to the other, that penance long and take part in his  
heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the wrong; and  
Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

"Is it he?" quoth one, 'is this the man?  
By Him who died on cross,  
With his cruel bow he laid full low 400  
The harmless Albatross.

"The spirit who bideth by himself  
In the land of mist and snow,  
He loved the bird that loved the man  
Who shot him with his bow.' 405

"The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew:  
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,  
And penance more will do.'

## PART VI

### FIRST VOICE

"But tell me, tell me! speak again 410  
Thy soft response renewing—  
What makes that ship drive on so fast?  
What is the ocean doing?"

### SECOND VOICE

"Still as a slave before his lord,  
The ocean hath no blast;  
His great bright eye most silently 415  
Up to the Moon is cast—

"If he may know which way to go;  
For she guides him, smooth or grim.  
See, brother, see! how graciously 420  
She looketh down on him.'

### FIRST VOICE

"But why drives on that ship The Mariner  
so fast, hath been cast  
Without or wave or wind?" into a trance;  
for the angelic  
power causeth  
the vessel to  
drive north-  
ward faster  
than human  
life could  
endure.

### SECOND VOICE

"The air is cut away before,  
And closes from behind.'

"Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
Or we shall be belated: 427

For slow and slow that ship will go,  
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

"I woke, and we were sailing on The super-  
As in a gentle weather: natural motion  
'Twas night, calm night, the is retarded;  
moon was high; the Mariner  
The dead men stood together. awakes, and  
his penance  
begins anew.

"All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter: 435  
All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
That in the Moon did glitter.

"The pang, the curse, with which they died,  
Had never passed away:  
I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440  
Nor turn them up to pray.

"And now this spell was snapped: The curse is  
once more finally ex-  
I viewed the ocean green, piated.  
And looked far forth, yet little saw  
Of what had else been seen— 445

"Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round, walks on,  
And turns no more his head;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend 450  
Doth close behind him tread.

"But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made:  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade. 455

"It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

"Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460  
Yet she sailed softly too:  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.

"Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed And the an-  
The light-house top I see? 465 cient Mariner  
Is this the hill? is this the kirk? beholdeth his  
Is this mine own countree? native coun-  
try.

"We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray—  
O let me be awake, my God!  
Or let me sleep away. 470

"The harbor-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn!  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the Moon. 475



"The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
That stands above the rock:  
The moonlight steeped in silentness  
The steady weathercock.

"And the bay was white with silent light, 480  
Till, rising from the same,  
Full many shapes, that shadows  
were,  
In crimson colors came.

The angelic  
spirits leave  
the dead  
bodies,

"A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were:  
I turned my eyes upon the deck—  
Oh, Christ! what saw I there! 487

And appear in  
their own  
forms of light.

"Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
And, by the holy rood!<sup>1</sup>  
A man all light, a seraph-man, 490  
On every corse there stood.

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
It was a heavenly sight!  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light; 495

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
No voice did they impart—  
No voice; but oh! the silence sank  
Like music on my heart.

"But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500  
I heard the Pilot's cheer;  
My head was turned perforce away,  
And I saw a boat appear.

"The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
I heard them coming fast: 505  
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy  
The dead men could not blast.

"I saw a third—I heard his voice:  
It is the Hermit good!  
He singeth loud his godly hymns 510  
That he makes in the wood.  
He'll shrieve my soul,<sup>2</sup> he'll wash away  
The Albatross's blood.

## PART VII

"This Hermit good lives in that 515  
wood  
Which slopes down to the sea.  
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!  
He loves to talk with mariners  
That come from a far countree.

The Hermit of  
the Wood,

"He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—  
He hath a cushion plump:  
It is the moss that wholly hides 520  
The rotted old oak-stump.

"The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,  
'Why, this is strange, I trow!  
Where are those lights so many and fair, 525  
That signal made but now?'

"'Strange, by my faith!' the Approacheth  
Hermit said—the ship  
with wonder.  
'And they answered not our cheer!  
The planks look<sup>3</sup> warped! and see those sails,  
How thin they are and sere! 530  
I never saw aught like to them,  
Unless perchance it were

"'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
My forest-brook along;  
When the ivy-tod<sup>4</sup> is heavy with snow, 535  
And the owl whoops to the wolf below,  
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

"'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—  
(The pilot made reply)  
I am a-feared!'—'Push on, push on!' 540  
Said the Hermit cheerily.

"The boat came closer to the ship,  
But I nor spake nor stirred;  
The boat came close beneath the ship,  
And straight a sound was heard. 545

"Under the water it rumbled on, The ship sud-  
Still louder and more dread: denly sinketh.  
It reached the ship, it split the bay;  
The ship went down like lead. 549

"Stunned by that loud and dread- The ancient  
ful sound, Mariner is  
Which sky and ocean smote, saved in the  
Like one that hath been seven days drowned, Pilot's boat.  
My body lay afloat;  
But swift as dreams, myself I found  
Within the Pilot's boat. 555

"Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,  
The boat spun round and round;  
And all was still, save that the hill  
Was telling of the sound.

"I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked, 560  
And fell down in a fit;  
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
And prayed where he did sit.

<sup>3</sup>In the edition of 1828 this was changed to "looked," which was kept in the editions of 1829 and 1834.

<sup>4</sup>Ivy-bush.

<sup>1</sup>Cross.

<sup>2</sup>Hear my confession, assign penance, and absolve me.

"I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,  
Who now doth crazy go, 565  
Laughed loud and long, and all the while  
His eyes went to and fro.  
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,  
The Devil knows how to row.'

"And now, all in my own countree, 570  
I stood on the firm land!  
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.

"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy 574  
man!" The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.  
The Hermit crossed his brow.  
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—  
What manner of man art thou?'

"Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched  
With a woeful agony,  
Which forced me to begin my tale; 580  
And then it left me free.

"Since then at an uncertain hour, 586  
That agony returns;  
And till my ghastly tale is told,  
This heart within me burns. And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

"I pass, like night, from land to land; 586  
I have strange power of speech;  
That moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me:  
To him my tale I teach. 590

"What loud uproar bursts from that door!  
The wedding-guests are there;  
But in the garden-bower the bride  
And bride-maids singing are;  
And hark the little vesper bell, 595  
Which biddeth me to prayer!

"O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been  
Alone on a wide, wide sea:  
So lonely 'twas, that God himself  
Scarce seemèd there to be. 600

"O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
'Tis sweeter far to me,  
To walk together to the kirk  
With a goodly company!—

"To walk together to the kirk, 605  
And all together pray,  
While each to his great Father bends,  
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,  
And youths and maidens gay! 609

"Farewell, farewell! but this I 610  
tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast. And to teach by his own example love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

"He prayeth best, who loveth best 615  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest 620  
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,  
And is of sense forlorn:  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn.<sup>1</sup> 625

## CHRISTABEL<sup>2</sup>

### PART THE FIRST

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock,  
Tu—whit!—Tu—whoo!  
And hark, again! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew. 5

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch;  
From her kennel beneath the rock  
She maketh answer to the clock, 9  
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;  
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?  
The night is chilly, but not dark. 15  
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.

<sup>1</sup>"Mrs. Barbauld once told me that she admired *The Ancient Mariner* very much, but that there were two faults in it—it was improbable, and had no moral. As for the probability, I owned that that might admit some question; but as to the want of a moral, I told her that in my own judgment the poem had too much; and that the only, or chief fault, if I might say so, was the obtrusion of the moral sentiment so openly on the reader as a principle or cause of action in a work of such pure imagination. It ought to have had no more moral than the *Arabian Nights'* tale of the merchant's sitting down to eat dates by the side of a well, and throwing the shells aside, and lo! a genie starts up, and says he *must* kill the aforesaid merchant, because one of the date shells had, it seems, put out the eye of the genie's son." (Coleridge, *Table Talk*, 31 May, 1830.)

<sup>2</sup>The first part was written in 1797, the second in 1800, and the conclusion to the second part perhaps in 1801. Published in 1816.

The night is chill, the cloud is gray: 20  
'Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the wood so late, 25  
A furlong from the castle gate?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothed knight;  
And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that's far away. 30

She stole along, she nothing spoke,  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak  
But moss and rarest mistletoe:  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree, 35  
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
The lovely lady, Christabel!  
It moaned as near, as near can be,  
But what it is she cannot tell.— 40  
On the other side it seems to be,  
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?  
There is not wind enough in the air 45  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady's cheek—  
There is not wind enough to twirl  
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can, 50  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!  
She folded her arms beneath her cloak, 55  
And stole to the other side of the oak.  
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,  
Dressed in a silken robe of white,  
That shadowy in the moonlight shone: 60  
The neck that made that white robe wan,  
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;  
Her blue-veined feet unsandaled were;  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair. 65  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see  
A lady so richly clad as she—  
Beautiful exceedingly!

"Mary mother, save me now!"  
Said Christabel; "and who art thou?" 70

The lady strange made answer meet,  
And her voice was faint and sweet:—  
"Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness:  
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!" 75  
Said Christabel, "How camest thou here?"  
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

"My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine: 80  
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:  
They choked my cries with force and fright,  
And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind, 85  
And they rode furiously behind.  
They spurred amain, their steeds were white:  
And once we crossed the shade of night.  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be; 90  
Nor do I know how long it is  
(For I have lain entranced, I wis)  
Since one, the tallest of the five,  
Took me from the palfrey's back,  
A weary woman, scarce alive. 95  
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:  
He placed me underneath this oak;  
He swore they would return with haste;  
Whither they went I cannot tell—  
I thought I heard, some minutes past; 100  
Sounds as of a castle bell.  
Stretch forth thy hand," thus ended she,  
"And help a wretched maid to flee."

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,  
And comforted fair Geraldine: 105  
"O well, bright dame! may you command  
The service of Sir Leoline;  
And gladly our stout chivalry  
Will he send forth, and friends withal,  
To guide and guard you safe and free 110  
Home to your noble father's hall."

She rose: and forth with steps they passed  
That strove to be, and were not, fast.  
Her gracious stars the lady bless'd,  
And thus spake on sweet Christabel: 115  
"All our household are at rest,  
The hall as silent as the cell;  
Sir Leoline is weak in health,  
And may not well awakened be,  
But we will move as if in stealth; 120  
And I beseech your courtesies,  
This night, to share your couch with me."

They crossed the moat, and Christabel  
Took the key that fitted well;  
A little door she opened straight, 125  
All in the middle of the gate;



The gate that was ironed within and without,  
Where an army in battle array had marched  
out.

The lady sank, belike through pain,  
And Christabel with might and main 130  
Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
Over the threshold of the gate:<sup>1</sup>  
Then the lady rose again,  
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear, 135  
They crossed the court: right glad they were.  
And Christabel devoutly cried  
To the lady by her side,  
"Praise we the Virgin all divine,  
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!"  
"Alas, alas!" said Geraldine, 141  
"I cannot speak for weariness."  
So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old 145  
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
The mastiff old did not awake,  
Yet she an angry moan did make!<sup>2</sup>  
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?  
Never till now she uttered yell 150  
Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch:  
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
Pass as lightly as you will! 155  
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,  
Amid their own white ashes lying;  
But when the lady passed, there came  
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;  
And Christabel saw the lady's eye, 160  
And nothing else saw she thereby,  
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,  
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.  
"O softly tread," said Christabel,  
"My father seldom sleepeth well." 165

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,  
And jealous of the listening air  
They steal their way from stair to stair,  
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
And now they pass the Baron's room, 170  
As still as death, with stifled breath!  
And now have reached her chamber door:  
And now doth Geraldine press down  
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air, 175  
And not a moonbeam enters here.  
But they without its light can see  
The chamber carved so curiously,  
Carved with figures strange and sweet,  
All made out of the carver's brain, 180  
For a lady's chamber meet:  
The lamp with twofold silver chain  
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;  
But Christabel the lamp will trim. 185  
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,  
And left it swinging to and fro,  
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,  
Sank down upon the floor below.

"O weary lady, Geraldine, 190  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!  
It is a wine of virtuous powers;  
My mother made it of wild flowers."

"And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn?" 195  
Christabel answered—"Woe is me!  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle-bell 200  
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.  
O mother dear! that thou wert here!"  
"I would," said Geraldine, "she were!"  
But soon with altered voice, said she—  
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!  
I have power to bid thee flee." 206  
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?  
Why stares she with unsettled eye?  
Can she the bodiless dead espy?  
And why with hollow voice cries she, 210  
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,  
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue— 215  
"Alas!" said she, "this ghastly ride—  
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!"  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,  
And faintly said, "'Tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:  
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright:  
She was most beautiful to see, 220  
Like a lady of a far countree. 225

And thus the lofty lady spake—  
"All they who live in the upper sky,

<sup>1</sup>The first intimation of Geraldine's real nature. It was formerly believed that evil spirits could not cross a Christian threshold. In the following stanza, again, Geraldine refuses to join in giving thanks to the Virgin Mary.

<sup>2</sup>Animals were formerly supposed to have a sense which warned them of the presence of spirits. In the following stanza even the fire feels Geraldine's presence.

Do love you, holy Christabel!  
 And you love them, and for their sake  
 And for the good which me befell, 230  
 Even I in my degree will try,  
 Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
 But now unrobe yourself; for I  
 Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie."

Quoth Christabel, "So let it be!" 235  
 And as the lady bade, did she.  
 Her gentle limbs did she undress,  
 And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe  
 So many thoughts moved to and fro, 240  
 That vain it were her lids to close;  
 So half-way from the bed she rose,  
 And on her elbow did recline  
 To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed, 245  
 And slowly rolled her eyes around;  
 Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
 Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
 The cincture from beneath her breast:  
 Her silken robe, and inner vest, 250  
 Dropped to her feet, and full in view,  
 Behold! her bosom and half her side—  
 A sight to dream of, not to tell!  
 O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs; 255  
 Ah! what a stricken look was hers!  
 Deep from within she seems half-way  
 To lift some weight with sick assay,  
 And eyes the maid and seeks delay;  
 Then suddenly, as one defied, 260  
 Collects herself in scorn and pride,  
 And lay down by the Maiden's side!—  
 And in her arms the maid she took,  
 Ah well-a-day!

And with low voice and doleful look 265  
 These words did say:  
 "In the touch of this bosom there worketh a  
 spell,

Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!  
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-  
 morrow,

This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;  
 But vainly thou warrest, 271

For this is alone in

Thy power to declare,

That in the dim forest

Thou heard'st a low moaning, 275

And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair;  
 And didst bring her home with thee in love and  
 in charity,

To shield her and shelter her from the damp  
 air."

# THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST

It was a lovely sight to see  
 The lady Christabel, when she  
 Was praying at the old oak tree.

Amid the jagged shadows  
 Of mossy leafless boughs, 5  
 Kneeling in the moonlight,  
 To make her gentle vows;

Her slender palms together pressed,  
 Heaving sometimes on her breast;  
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale— 10  
 Her face, oh call it fair not pale,  
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear,  
 Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)  
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully, 15  
 Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,<sup>1</sup>

\*Dreaming that alone, which is—  
 O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,  
 The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?  
 And lo! the worker of these harms, 20  
 That holds the maiden in her arms,  
 Seems to slumber still and mild.  
 As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
 O Geraldine! since arms of thine 25  
 Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
 O Geraldine! one hour was thine—  
 Thou'st had thy will! By tairn<sup>2</sup> and rill,  
 The night-birds all that hour were still.  
 But now they are jubilant anew, 30  
 From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!  
 Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell!

And see! the lady Christabel  
 Gathers herself from out her trance;  
 Her limbs relax, her countenance 35  
 Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids  
 Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—  
 Large tears that leave the lashes bright!  
 And oft the while she seems to smile  
 As infants at a sudden light! 40

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
 Like a youthful hermitess,  
 Beauteous in a wilderness,  
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
 And, if she move unquietly, 45  
 Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free  
 Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
 No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.  
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere,  
 What if she knew her mother near? 50  
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
 That saints will aid if men will call:  
 For the blue sky bends over all!

<sup>1</sup>Think.

<sup>2</sup>I. e., tarn, small mountain pool or lake.

## PART THE SECOND

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,  
Knells us back to a world of death.  
These words Sir Leoline first said,  
When he rose and found his lady dead:  
These words Sir Leoline will say  
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began  
That still at dawn the sacristan,  
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,  
Five and forty beads must tell  
Between each stroke—a warning knell,  
Which not a soul can choose but hear  
From Bratha Head<sup>1</sup> to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, "So let it knell!  
And let the drowsy sacristan  
Still count as slowly as he can!  
There is no lack of such, I ween,  
As well fill up the space between.  
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,  
And Dungeon-ghyll<sup>2</sup> so foully rent,  
With ropes of rock and bells of air  
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,  
Who all give back, one after t'other,  
The death-note to their living brother;  
And oft too, by the knell offended,  
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,  
The devil mocks the doleful tale  
With a merry peal from Borodale."

The air is still! through mist and cloud  
That merry peal comes ringing loud;  
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,  
And rises lightly from the bed,  
Puts on her silken vestments white,  
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,  
And nothing doubting of her spell  
Awakens the lady Christabel.  
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?  
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied  
The same who lay down by her side  
O rather say, the same whom she  
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!  
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!  
For she belike hath drunken deep  
Of all the blessedness of sleep!  
And while she spake, her looks, her air  
Such gentle thankfulness declare,  
That (so it seemed) her girded vests  
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.  
"Sure I have sinned!" said Christabel,  
"Now heaven be praised if all be well!"

And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,  
Did she the lofty lady greet  
With such perplexity of mind  
As dreams too lively leave behind. 55

5 So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed  
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed  
That He, who on the cross did groan,  
Might wash away her sins unknown,  
She forthwith led fair Geraldine 60  
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

10 The lovely maid and the lady tall  
Are pacing both into the hall,  
And pacing on through page and groom,  
Enter the Baron's presence-room. 65

The Baron rose, and while he pressed  
His gentle daughter to his breast,  
With cheerful wonder in his eyes  
The lady Geraldine espies,  
And gave such welcome to the same, 70  
As might beseem so bright a dame!

20 But when he heard the lady's tale,  
And when she told her father's name,  
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,  
Murmuring o'er the name again, 75  
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;  
But whispering tongues can poison truth;  
And constancy lives in realms above;  
And life is thorny; and youth is vain; 80  
And to be wroth with one we love  
Doth work like madness in the brain.  
And thus it chanced, as I divine,  
With Roland and Sir Leoline.  
Each spake words of high disdain 85  
And insult to his heart's best brother:  
They parted—ne'er to meet again!  
But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining—  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining, 90  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;  
A dreary sea now flows between:  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween, 95  
The marks of that which once hath been.

40 Sir Leoline, a moment's space,  
Stood gazing on the damsel's face:  
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine  
Came back upon his heart again.

50 O then the Baron forgot his age, 100  
His noble heart swelled high with rage;  
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side  
He would proclaim it far and wide,  
With trump and solemn heraldry,  
That they, who thus had wronged the dame,

<sup>1</sup>The Brathay is a river which flows into Lake Windermere, in the Lake country.

<sup>2</sup>Ravine containing a stream.



Were base as spotted infamy!	106	Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,	160
"And if they dare deny the same,		Detain you on the valley road.	
My herald shall appoint a week,			
And let the recreant traitors seek		"And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,	
My tourney court—that there and then	110	My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes	
I may dislodge their reptile souls		Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,	
From the bodies and forms of men!"		And reaches soon that castle good	165
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!		Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.	
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he			
kenned		"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are	
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!		fleet,	
		Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,	
And now the tears were on his face,	116	More loud than your horses' echoing feet!	
And fondly in his arms he took		And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,	170
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,		Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!	
Prolonging it with joyous look.		Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—	
Which when she viewed, a vision fell	120	Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.	
Upon the soul of Christabel,		He bids thee come without delay	
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!		With all thy numerous array	175
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again—		And take thy lovely daughter home:	
(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,		And he will meet thee on the way	
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)	125	With all his numerous array	
		White with their panting palfreys' foam:	
Again she saw that bosom old,		And, by mine honor! I will say,	180
Again she felt that bosom cold,		That I repent me of the day	
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:		When I spake words of fierce disdain	
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,		To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine!—	
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid	130	—For since that evil hour hath flown,	
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.		Many a summer's sun hath shone;	185
		Yet ne'er found I a friend again	
The touch, the sight, had passed away,		Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."	
And in its stead that vision bless'd,			
Which comforted her after-rest,		The lady fell, and clasped his knees,	
While in the lady's arms she lay,	135	Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;	
Had put a rapture in her breast,		And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,	190
And on her lips and o'er her eyes		His gracious hail on all bestowing:	
Spread smiles like light!		"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,	
With new surprise,		Are sweeter than my harp can tell;	
"What ails then my beloved child?"		Yet might I gain a boon of thee,	
The Baron said.—His daughter mild	140	This day my journey should not be;	195
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"		So strange a dream hath come to me,	
I ween, she had no power to tell		That I had vowed with music loud	
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.		To clear yon wood from thing unblest'd,	
		Warned by a vision in my rest!	
Yet he who saw this Geraldine		For in my sleep I saw that dove,	200
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.	145	That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,	
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,		And call'st by thy own daughter's name—	
As if she feared she had offended		Sir Leoline! I saw the same,	
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!		Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,	
And with such lowly tones she prayed		Among the green herbs in the forest alone.	
She might be sent without delay	150	Which when I saw and when I heard,	206
Home to her father's mansion.		I wondered what might ail the bird;	
"Nay!		For nothing near it could I see,	
Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.		Save the grass and green herbs underneath	
"Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!		the old tree.	
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,	154		
And take two steeds with trappings proud,		"And in my dream methought I went	210
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best		To search out what might there be found;	
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,		And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,	
And clothe you both in solemn vest,		That thus lay fluttering on the ground.	
And over the mountains haste along,			

I went and peered, and could descry  
 No cause for her distressful cry; 215  
 But yet for her dear lady's sake  
 I stooped, methought, the dove to take,  
 When lo! I saw a bright green snake  
 Coiled around its wings and neck.  
 Green as the herbs on which it couched, 220  
 Close by the dove's its head it crouched;  
 And with the dove it heaves and stirs,  
 Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!  
 I woke; it was the midnight hour,  
 The clock was echoing in the tower; 225  
 But though my slumber was gone by,  
 This dream it would not pass away—  
 It seems to live upon my eye!  
 And thence I vowed this self-same day  
 With music strong and saintly song 230  
 To wander through the forest bare,  
 Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,  
 Half-listening heard him with a smile;  
 Then turned to Lady Geraldine, 235  
 His eyes made up of wonder and love;  
 And said in courtly accents fine,  
 "Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,  
 With arms more strong than harp or song,  
 Thy sire and I will crush the snake!" 240  
 He kissed her forehead as he spake,  
 And Geraldine in maiden wise  
 Casting down her large bright eyes,  
 With blushing cheek and courtesy fine  
 She turned her from Sir Leoline; 245  
 Softly gathering up her train,  
 That o'er her right arm fell again;  
 And folded her arms across her chest,  
 And couched her head upon her breast,  
 And looked askance at Christabel— 250  
 Jesu, Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy;  
 And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,  
 Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,  
 And with somewhat of malice, and more of  
 dread, 255  
 At Christabel she looked askance!—  
 One moment—and the sight was fled!  
 But Christabel in dizzy trance  
 Stumbling on the unsteady ground  
 Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound; 260  
 And Geraldine again turned round,  
 And like a thing that sought relief,  
 Full of wonder and full of grief,  
 She rolled her large bright eyes divine  
 Wildly on Sir Leoline. 265

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,  
 She nothing sees—no sight but one!  
 The maid, devoid of guile and sin,

I know not how, in fearful wise,  
 So deeply had she drunken in 270  
 That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,  
 That all her features were resigned  
 To this sole image in her mind:  
 And passively did imitate  
 That look of dull and treacherous hate! 275  
 And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,  
 Still picturing that look askance  
 With forced unconscious sympathy  
 Full before her father's view—  
 As far as such a look could be 280  
 In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid  
 Paused awhile, and inly prayed:  
 Then falling at the Baron's feet,  
 "By my mother's soul do I entreat 285  
 That thou this woman send away!"  
 She said: and more she could not say:  
 For what she knew she could not tell,  
 O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild, 290  
 Sir Leoline? Thy only child  
 Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,  
 So fair, so innocent, so mild;  
 The same, for whom thy lady died!  
 O, by the pangs of her dear mother 295  
 Think thou no evil of thy child!  
 For her, and thee, and for no other,  
 She prayed the moment ere she died:  
 Prayed that the babe for whom she died, 299  
 Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!  
 That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,  
 Sir Leoline!  
 And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,  
 Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain  
 If thoughts like these had any share,  
 They only swelled his rage and pain, 305  
 And did but work confusion there.  
 His heart was cleft with pain and rage,  
 His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild  
 Dishonored thus in his old age;  
 Dishonored by his only child, 310  
 And all his hospitality  
 To the wronged daughter of his friend  
 By more than woman's jealousy  
 Brought thus to a disgraceful end—  
 He rolled his eye with stern regard 315  
 Upon the gentle minstrel bard,  
 And said in tones abrupt, austere—  
 "Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?  
 I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;  
 And turning from his own sweet maid, 320  
 The agéd knight, Sir Leoline,  
 Led forth the lady Geraldine!

## THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND

A little child, a limber elf,  
 Singing, dancing to itself,  
 A fairy thing with red round cheeks,  
 That always finds, and never seeks,  
 Makes such a vision to the sight  
 As fills a father's eyes with light;  
 And pleasures flow in so thick and fast  
 Upon his heart, that he at last  
 Must needs express his love's excess  
 With words of unmeant bitterness.  
 Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together  
 Thoughts so all unlike each other;  
 To mutter and mock a broken charm,  
 To dally with wrong that does no harm.  
 Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty  
 At each wild word to feel within  
 A sweet recoil of love and pity.  
 And what, if in a world of sin  
 (O sorrow and shame should this be true!)  
 Such giddiness of heart and brain  
 Comes seldom save from rage and pain,  
 So talks as it's most used to do.<sup>1</sup>

HYMN BEFORE SUN-  
RISE, IN THE VALE OF  
CHAMOUNI<sup>2</sup>

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star  
 In his steep course? So long he seems to  
 pause

<sup>1</sup>Coleridge never finished *Christabel*, though he more than once insisted that he had "the whole plan entire from beginning to end" in his mind. James Gillman states that Coleridge outlined to his friends the conclusion of the story as follows: "The following relation was to have occupied a third and fourth canto, and to have closed the tale. Over the mountains, the Bard, as directed by Sir Leoline, hastes with his disciple; but in consequence of one of those inundations supposed to be common to this country, the spot only where the castle once stood is discovered—the edifice itself being washed away. He determines to return. Geraldine, being acquainted with all that is passing, like the weird sisters in Macbeth, vanishes. Reappearing, however, she awaits the return of the Bard, exciting in the meantime, by her wily arts, all the anger she could rouse in the Baron's breast, as well as that jealousy of which he is described to have been susceptible. The old Bard and the youth at length arrive, and therefore she can no longer personate the character of Geraldine, the daughter of Lord Roland de Vaux, but changes her appearance to that of the accepted though absent lover of Christabel. Now ensues a courtship most distressing to Christabel, who feels, she knows not why, great disgust for her once favored knight. This coldness is very painful to the Baron, who has no more conception than herself of the supernatural transformation. She at last yields to her father's entreaties, and consents to approach the altar with this hated suitor. The real lover, returning, enters at this moment, and produces the ring which she had once given him in sign of her betrothment. Thus defeated, the supernatural being Geraldine disappears. As predicted, the castle bell tolls, the mother's voice is heard, end, to the exceeding great joy of the parties, the rightful marriage takes place, after which follows a reconciliation and explanation between the father and daughter."

<sup>2</sup>First printed in 1802. Chamouni is a valley, about 14 miles in length, north of Mont Blanc. A few months after

On thy bald awful head, O sovran BLANC!  
 The Arve and Arveiron<sup>3</sup> at thy base  
 Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!  
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,  
 How silently! Around thee and above  
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,  
 An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,  
 As with a wedge! But when I look again,  
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,  
 Thy habitation from eternity!  
 O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon  
 thee,  
 Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,  
 Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in  
 prayer  
 I worshiped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,  
 So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,  
 Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my  
 Thought,  
 Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret joy:  
 Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,  
 Into the mighty vision passing—there  
 As in her natural form, swelled vast to  
 Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise  
 Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,  
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,  
 Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart,  
 awake!  
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of the  
 Vale!  
 O struggling with the darkness all the night,  
 And visited all night by troops of stars,  
 Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:  
 Companion of the morning-star at dawn,  
 Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn  
 Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!  
 Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?  
 Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?  
 Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!  
 Who called you forth from night and utter  
 death,  
 From dark and icy caverns called you forth,  
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,

Coleridge's death De Quincey made it known (in an article in *Tail's Magazine*) that Coleridge had never been to Chamouni, and that the *Hymn* "is an expansion of a short poem in stanzas upon the same subject by Frederica Brun, a female poet of Germany. . . . The mere framework of the poem is exactly the same. . . . On the other hand, by a judicious amplification of some topics, and by its far deeper tone of lyrical enthusiasm, the dry bones of the German outline have been created by Coleridge into the fullness of life. It is not, therefore, a paraphrase, but a recast of the original."

<sup>3</sup>Rivers rising at the foot of Mont Blanc.



For ever shattered and the same for ever?  
 Who gave you your invulnerable life,  
 Your strength, your speed, your fury, and  
     your joy, 45  
 Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?  
 And who commanded (and the silence came),  
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's  
     brow

Adown enormous ravines slope amain— 50  
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty  
     voice,

And stopped at once amid their maddest  
     plunge!

Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!  
 Who made you glorious as the Gates of Heaven  
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the  
     sun 55

Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living  
     flowers

Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your  
     feet?—

God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,  
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!

God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome  
     voice! 60

Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like  
     sounds!

And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,  
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!  
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's  
     nest! 65

Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-storm!  
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!  
 Ye signs and wonders of the element!

Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-  
     pointing peaks, 70

Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,  
 Shoots downward, glittering through the pure  
     serene

Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—  
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou

That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low 75  
 In adoration, upward from thy base

Slow traveling with dim eyes suffused with  
     tears,

Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,  
 To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise, 79

Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth!  
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,

Thou dread ambassador from Earth to  
     Heaven,

Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,  
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun  
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

## DEJECTION: AN ODE

WRITTEN APRIL 4, 1802

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,  
 With the old Moon in her arms;  
 And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!  
 We shall have a deadly storm.

*Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.*

### I

WELL! If the Bard was weather-wise, who  
     made

The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,  
 This night, so tranquil now, will not go  
     hence

Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade  
 Than those which mold yon cloud in lazy  
     flakes, 5

Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and  
     rakes

Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,  
 Which better far were mute.

For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!

And overspread with phantom light, 10  
 (With swimming phantom light o'erspread  
 But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)

I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling  
 The coming-on of rain and squally blast.

And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,  
 And the slant night-shower driving loud  
     and fast! 16

Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst  
     they awed,

And sent my soul abroad,

Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,  
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it move  
     and live! 20

### II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,  
 A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,  
 Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,

In word, or sigh, or tear—

O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood, 25  
 To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,

All this long eve, so balmy and serene,  
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,  
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green:

And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!  
 And those thin clouds above, in flakes and  
     bars, 31

That give away their motion to the stars;  
 Those stars, that glide behind them or be-  
     tween,

Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always  
     seen:

Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew 35  
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;

I see them all so excellently fair,  
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

III

My genial spirits fail;  
And what can these avail 40  
To lift the smothering weight from off my  
breast?  
It were a vain endeavor,  
Though I should gaze for ever  
On that green light that lingers in the west:  
I may not hope from outward forms to win  
The passion and the life, whose fountains are  
within. 46

IV

O Lady! we receive but what we give,  
And in our life alone does Nature live:  
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!  
And would we aught behold, of higher  
worth, 50  
Than that inanimate cold world allowed  
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,  
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth  
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
Enveloping the Earth— 55  
And from the soul itself must there be sent  
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,  
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me  
What this strong music in the soul may be!  
What, and wherein it doth exist, 61  
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,  
This beautiful and beauty-making power.  
Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was  
given,  
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour, 65  
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and  
shower,  
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,  
Which, wedding Nature to us, gives in dower  
A new Earth and new Heaven, 69  
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—  
Joy is the sweet, Joy the luminous cloud—  
We in ourselves rejoice!  
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,  
All melodies the echoes of that voice,  
All colors a suffusion from that light. 75

VI

There was a time when, though my path was  
rough,  
This joy within me dallied with distress,  
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff  
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happi-  
ness:  
For Hope grew round me, like the twining  
vine, 80  
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed  
mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to earth:  
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;  
But oh! each visitation 84  
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,  
My shaping spirit of Imagination.  
For not to think of what I needs must feel,  
But to be still and patient, all I can;  
And haply by abstruse research to steal 89  
From my own nature all the natural man—  
This was my sole resource, my only plan:  
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,  
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my  
mind,  
Reality's dark dream! 95  
Turn from you, and listen to the wind,  
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a  
scream  
Of agony by torture lengthened out  
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that rav'st  
without,  
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted  
tree, 100  
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,  
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,  
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,  
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,  
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping  
flowers, 105  
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry  
song,  
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves  
among.  
Thou actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!  
Thou mighty Poet, e'en to frenzy bold!  
What tell'st thou now about? 110  
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,  
With groans of trampled men, with smart-  
ing wounds—  
At once they groan with pain, and shudder  
with the cold!  
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!  
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,  
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all  
is over— 116  
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep  
and loud!  
A tale of less affright,  
And tempered with delight,  
As Otway's<sup>1</sup> self had framed the tender lay,—  
'Tis of a little child 121  
Upon a lonesome wild,  
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:  
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,  
And now screams loud, and hopes to make  
her mother hear. 125

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Otway (1652-1685), the dramatist.

## VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:

Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!

Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,

And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,

May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling, <sup>130</sup>

Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth!

With light heart may she rise,

Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,

Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice; <sup>134</sup>

To her may all things live, from pole to pole,

Their life the eddying of her living soul!

O simple spirit, guided from above,

Dear Lady! friend devotest of my choice,

Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice. <sup>139</sup>

YOUTH AND AGE<sup>1</sup>

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,

Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—

Both were mine! Life went a-maying

With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,

When I was young! <sup>5</sup>

When I was young?—Ah, woeful When!

Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!

This breathing house not built with hands,

This body that does me grievous wrong,

O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands, <sup>10</sup>

How lightly then it flashed along:—

Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,

On winding lakes and rivers wide,

That ask no aid of sail or oar,

That fear no spite of wind or tide! <sup>15</sup>

Nought cared this body for wind or weather

When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;

Friendship is a sheltering tree;

O! the joys, that came down shower-like, <sup>20</sup>

Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,

Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woeful Ere,

Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!

O Youth! for years so many and sweet, <sup>25</sup>

'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,

<sup>1</sup>Began in 1823; first printed (without the last eleven lines) in 1828. The last eleven lines were written, and published as a separate poem, in 1832.

I'll think it but a fond conceit—

It cannot be that Thou art gone!

Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:—

And thou wert aye a masker bold! <sup>30</sup>

What strange disguise hast now put on,

To make believe, that thou art gone?

I see these locks in silvery slips,

This drooping gait, this altered size:

But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips, <sup>35</sup>

And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!

Life is but thought: so think I will

That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,

But the tears of mournful eve! <sup>40</sup>

Where no hope is, life's a warning

That only serves to make us grieve,

When we are old:

That only serves to make us grieve

With oft and tedious taking-leave, <sup>45</sup>

Like some poor nigh-related guest,

That may not rudely be dismissed;

Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,

And tells the jest without the smile.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE<sup>2</sup>

Lines Composed 21st February, 1825

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—

The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—

And Winter slumbering in the open air,

Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring! <sup>5</sup>

And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,

Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,

Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.

Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,

For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away! <sup>10</sup>

With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:

And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?

Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,  
And Hope without an object cannot live.

<sup>2</sup>First printed in 1828.



## BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA;

OR BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF MY LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS  
(1817)

## CHAPTER I

IT HAS been my lot to have had my name introduced both in conversation, and in print, more frequently than I find it easy to explain, whether I consider the fewness, unimportance, and limited circulation of my writings, or the retirement and distance in which I have lived, both from the literary and political world. Most often it has been connected with some charge which I could not acknowledge, or some principle which I had never entertained. \* Nevertheless, had I had no other motive or incitement, the reader would not have been troubled with this exculpation. What my additional purposes were, will be seen in the following pages. It will be found that the least of what I have written concerns myself personally. I have used the narration chiefly for the purpose of giving a continuity to the work, in part for the sake of the miscellaneous reflections suggested to me by particular events, but still more as introductory to the statement of my principles in Politics, Religion, and Philosophy, and an application of the rules, deduced from philosophical principles, to poetry and criticism. But of the objects which I proposed to myself, it was not the least important to effect, as far as possible, a settlement of the long continued controversy concerning the true nature of poetic diction; and at the same time to define with the utmost impartiality the real *poetic* character of the poet<sup>1</sup> by whose writings this controversy was first kindled, and has been since fueled and fanned.

In 1794,<sup>2</sup> when I had barely passed the verge of manhood, I published a small volume of juvenile poems. They were received with a degree of favor which, young as I was, I well know was bestowed on them not so much for any positive merit, as because they were considered buds of hope, and promises of better works to come. The critics of that day, the most flattering, equally with the severest,

concurred in objecting to them obscurity, a general turgidness of diction, and a profusion of new coined double epithets. The first is the fault which a writer is the least able to detect in his own compositions: and my mind was not then sufficiently disciplined to receive the authority of others, as a substitute for my own conviction. Satisfied that the thoughts, such as they were, could not have been expressed otherwise, or at least more perspicuously, I forgot to inquire, whether the thoughts themselves did not demand a degree of attention unsuitable to the nature and objects of poetry. This remark, however, applies chiefly, though not exclusively, to the *Religious Musings*. The remainder of the charge I admitted to its full extent, and not without sincere acknowledgments both to my private and public censors for their friendly admonitions. In the after editions, I pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand, and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction; though in truth, these parasite plants of youthful poetry had insinuated themselves into my longer poems with such intricacy of union, that I was often obliged to omit disentangling the weed, from the fear of snapping the flower. From that period to the date of the present work I have published nothing, with my name, which could by any possibility have come before the board of anonymous criticism. Even the three or four poems printed with the works of a friend,<sup>3</sup> as far as they were censured at all, were charged with the same or similar defects, though I am persuaded not with equal justice — with an excess of ornament, in addition to strained and elaborate diction.<sup>4</sup> May I be permitted to add, that, even at the early period of my juvenile poems, I saw and admitted the superiority of an austerer and more natural style, with an insight not less clear than I at present possess. My judgment was stronger than were my powers of realizing its dictates; and the faults of my language, though indeed partly owing to a wrong choice of subjects, and the desire of giving a poetic coloring to abstract and metaphysical truths,

<sup>3</sup>Printed with Wordsworth's poems in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798. Coleridge's poems in the volume were: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*; *The Nightingale*, a *Conversation Poem*; *The Foster-Mother's Tale*; and *The Dungeon*.

<sup>4</sup>See the criticisms on the *Ancient Mariner*, in the *Monthly and Critical Reviews* of the first volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*. (Coleridge.)

<sup>1</sup>Wordsworth.

<sup>2</sup>A slip — really the spring of 1796. Coleridge's memory was treacherous, and there are other inaccuracies in the *Biographia Literaria*.

in which a new world then seemed to open upon me, did yet, in part likewise, originate in unfeigned diffidence of my own comparative talent.—During several years of my youth and early manhood, I revered those who had re-introduced the manly simplicity of the Greek, and of our own elder poets, with such enthusiasm as made the hope seem presumptuous of writing successfully in the same style. Perhaps a similar process has happened to others; but my earliest poems were marked by an ease and simplicity, which I have studied, perhaps with inferior success, to impress on my later compositions.

At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time, a very severe master. He<sup>1</sup> early molded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil, and again of Virgil to Ovid. He habituated me to compare Lucretius (in such extracts as I then read), Terence, and above all the chaster poems of Catullus, not only with the Roman poets of the, so called, silver and brazen ages; but with even those of the Augustan era: and on grounds of plain sense and universal logic to see and assert the superiority of the former in the truth and nativeness both of their thoughts and diction. At the same time that we were studying the Greek tragic poets, he made us read Shakespeare and Milton as lessons: and they were the lessons too, which required most time and trouble to bring up, so as to escape his censure. I learned from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more fugitive causes. In the truly great poets, he would say, there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word; and I well remember that, availing himself of the synonyms to the Homer of Didymus, he made us attempt to show, with regard to each, why it would not have answered the same purpose; and wherein consisted the peculiar fitness of the word in the original text.

In our own English compositions (at least for the last three years of our school education), he showed no mercy to phrase, meta-

phor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. *Lute, harp, and lyre, Muse, Muses, and inspirations, Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hippocrene* were all an abomination to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming “Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your nurse’s daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh aye! the cloister-pump, I suppose!” Nay certain introductions; similes, and examples, were placed by name on a list of interdiction. Among the similes, there was, I remember, that of the manchineel fruit,<sup>2</sup> as suiting equally well with too many subjects; in which however it yielded the palm at once to the example of Alexander and Clytus, which was equally good and apt, whatever might be the theme. Was it ambition? Alexander and Clytus!—Flattery? Alexander and Clytus!—anger—drunkenness—pride—friendship—ingratitude—late repentance? Still, still Alexander and Clytus! At length, the praises of agriculture having been exemplified in the sagacious observation that, had Alexander been holding the plow, he would not have run his friend Clytus through with a spear, this tried and serviceable old friend was banished by public edict in *sacula saculorum*.<sup>3</sup> I have sometimes ventured to think that a list of this kind, or an *index expurgatorius*<sup>4</sup> of certain well-known and ever-returning phrases, both introductory, and transitional, including a large assortment of modest egoisms, and flattering illeisms,<sup>5</sup> etc., etc., might be hung up in our Law-Courts, and both Houses of Parliament, with great advantage to the public, as an important saving of national time, an incalculable relief to his Majesty’s ministers, but above all, as insuring the thanks of country attorneys, and their clients, who have private bills to carry through the House.

Be this as it may, there was one custom of our master’s which I cannot pass over in silence, because I think it imitable and worthy

<sup>2</sup>The manchineel is a West Indian tree with poisonous milky sap and acrid fruit.

<sup>3</sup>For ever.

<sup>4</sup>List of prohibitions (as here used).

<sup>5</sup>Excessive use of the pronoun *he*, with reference either to another or to one’s self in the 3rd person. Coleridge used this word also in *The Friend*, but apparently no one else has ever used it.

<sup>1</sup>The Rev. James Bowyer, many years Head Master of the Grammar School, Christ’s Hospital. (Coleridge.)

of imitation. He would often permit our exercises, under some pretext of want of time, to accumulate, till each lad had four or five to be looked over. Then placing the whole number abreast on his desk, he would ask the writer, why this or that sentence might not have found as appropriate a place under this or that other thesis: and if no satisfying answer could be returned, and two faults of the same kind were found in one exercise, the irrevocable verdict followed, the exercise was torn up, and another on the same subject to be produced, in addition to the tasks of the day. The reader will, I trust, excuse this tribute of recollection to a man whose severities, even now, not seldom furnish the dreams, by which the blind fancy would fain interpret to the mind the painful sensations of dis-tempered sleep; but neither lessen nor dim the deep sense of my moral and intellectual obligations. He sent us to the University excellent Latin and Greek scholars, and tolerable Hebraists. Yet our classical knowledge was the least of the good gifts which we derived from his zealous and conscientious tutorage. He is now gone to his final reward, full of years, and full of honors, even of those honors which were dearest to his heart, as gratefully bestowed by that school, and still binding him to the interests of that school, in which he had been himself educated, and to which during his whole life he was a dedicated thing.

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#### CHAPTER IV

\* \* \* DURING the last year of my residence at Cambridge, I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publication entitled *Descriptive Sketches*; and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is an harshness and acerbity connected and combined with words and images all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of the hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit was elaborating. The language was not only peculiar and strong, but at times knotty and contorted, as by its own impatient strength; while the novelty and

struggling crowd of images, acting in conjunction with the difficulties of the style, demanded always a greater closeness of attention, than poetry—at all events, than descriptive poetry—has a right to claim. It not seldom therefore justified the complaint of obscurity. In the following extract I have sometimes fancied that I saw an emblem of the poem itself, and of the author's genius as it was then displayed.—

'Tis storm; and hid in mist from hour to hour,  
All day the floods a deepening murmur pour;  
The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight:  
Dark is the region as with coming night;  
And yet what frequent bursts of overpowering  
light!

\* Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,  
Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form;  
Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine  
The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline;  
Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,  
At once to pillars turned that flame with gold;  
Behind his sail the peasant strives to shun  
The west, that burns like one dilated sun,  
Where in a mighty crucible expire  
The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of fire.

The poetic Psyche, in its process to full development, undergoes as many changes as its Greek namesake, the butterfly.<sup>1</sup> And it is remarkable how soon genius clears and purifies itself from the faults and errors of its earliest products; faults which, in its earliest compositions, are the more obtrusive and confluent, because as heterogeneous elements, which had only a temporary use, they constitute the very ferment, by which themselves are carried off. Or we may compare them to some diseases, which must work on the humors, and be thrown out on the surface, in order to secure the patient from their future recurrence. I was in my twenty-fourth year, when I had the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth personally, and while memory lasts, I shall hardly forget the sudden effect produced on my mind, by his recitation of a

<sup>1</sup>The fact that, in Greek, Psyche is the common name for the soul and the butterfly, is thus alluded to in the following stanzas from an unpublished poem of the author:

"The Butterfly the ancient Grecians made  
The soul's fair emblem, and its only name—  
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade  
Of mortal life! For in this earthly frame  
Ours is the reptile's lot, much toil, much blame,  
Manifold motions making little speed,  
And to deform and kill the things whereon we feed."  
(Coleridge.)



manuscript poem, which still remains unpublished, but of which the stanza and tone of style were the same as those of *The Female Vagrant*, as originally printed in the first volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*. There was here no mark of strained thought, or forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery; and, as the poet hath himself well described in his *Lines on revisiting the Wye*,<sup>1</sup> manly reflection and human associations had given both variety, and an additional interest to natural objects, which, in the passion and appetite of the first love, they had seemed to him neither to need nor permit. The occasional obscurities, which had risen from an imperfect control over the resources of his native language, had almost wholly disappeared, together with that worse defect of arbitrary and illogical phrases, at once hackneyed and fantastic, which hold so distinguished a place in the *technique* of ordinary poetry, and will, more or less, alloy the earlier poems of the truest genius, unless the attention has been specifically directed to their worthlessness and incongruity.<sup>2</sup> I did not perceive anything particular in the mere style of the poem alluded to during its recitation, except indeed such difference as was not separable from the thought and manner; and the Spenserian stanza, which always, more or less, recalls to the reader's mind Spenser's own style, would doubtless have authorized, in my then opinion, a more frequent descent to the phrases of ordinary life, than could without an ill effect have been hazarded in the heroic couplet. It was not, however, the freedom from false taste, whether as to common defects, or to those more properly his own, which made so unusual an impression on my feelings

immediately, and subsequently on my judgment. It was the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying, the objects observed; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere, and with it the depth and height of the ideal world around forms, incidents, and situations, of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the luster, had dried up the sparkle and the dew drops. "To find no contradiction in the union of old and new; to contemplate the ANCIENT of days and all his works with feelings as fresh, as if all had then sprang forth at the first creative fiat; characterizes the mind that feels the riddle of the world, and may help to unravel it. To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood; to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances, which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar;

'With sun and moon and stars throughout the year,  
And man and woman';

this is the character and privilege of genius, and one of the marks which distinguish genius from talents. And therefore is it the prime merit of genius and its most unequivocal mode of manifestation, so to represent familiar objects as to awaken in the minds of others a kindred feeling concerning them and that freshness of sensation which is the constant accompaniment of mental, no less than of bodily, convalescence. Who has not a thousand times seen snow fall on water? Who has not watched it with a new feeling, from the time that he has read Burns's comparison of sensual pleasure

'To snow that falls upon a river  
A moment white—then gone for ever'<sup>3</sup>

In poems, equally as in philosophic disquisitions, genius produces the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Truths of all others the most awful and mysterious, yet being at the same time of universal interest, are too often con-

<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wordsworth, even in his two earliest, *The Evening Walk* and the *Descriptive Sketches*, is more free from this latter defect than most of the young poets his contemporaries. It may however be exemplified, together with the harsh and obscure construction, in which he more often offended, in the following lines:—

"Mid stormy vapors ever driving by,  
Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons cry;  
Where hardly given the hopeless waste to cheer,  
Denied the bread of life the foodful ear,  
Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest spray,  
And apple sickens pale in summer's ray;  
E'en here content has fixed her smiling reign  
With independence, child of high disdain."

I hope, I need not say, that I have quoted these lines for no other purpose than to make my meaning fully understood. It is to be regretted that Mr. Wordsworth has not republished these two poems entire. (Coleridge.)

<sup>3</sup> See *Tam O'Shanter*, ll. 59ff.

sidered as *so* true, that they lose all the life and efficiency of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors."<sup>1</sup>

This excellence, which in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings is more or less predominant, and which constitutes the character of his mind, I no sooner felt, than I sought to understand. Repeated meditations led me first to suspect—and a more intimate analysis of the human faculties, their appropriate marks, functions, and effects, matured my conjecture into full conviction—that Fancy and Imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power. It is not, I own, easy to conceive a more opposite translation of the Greek *phantasia* than the Latin *imaginatio*; but it is equally true that in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective, unconscious good sense working progressively to desynonymize those words originally of the same meaning, which the conflux of dialects supplied to the more homogeneous languages, as the Greek and German: and which the same cause, joined with accidents of translation from original works of different countries, occasion in mixed languages like our own. The first and most important point to be proved is, that two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word, and—this done—to appropriate that word exclusively to one meaning, and the synonym, should there be one, to the other. But if—as will be often the case in the arts and sciences—no synonym exists, we must either invent or borrow a word. In the present instance the appropriation has already begun, and been legitimated in the derivative adjective: Milton had a highly *imaginative*, Cowley a very *fanciful* mind. If therefore I should succeed in establishing the actual existences of two faculties generally different, the nomenclature would be at once determined. To the faculty by which I had characterized Milton, we should confine the term *imagination*; while the other would be contra-distinguished as *fancy*. Now were it once fully ascertained, that this division is no

less grounded in nature than that of delirium from mania, or Otway's

Lutes, lobsters, seas of milk, and ships of amber,<sup>2</sup> from Shakespeare's

What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?<sup>3</sup>

or from the preceding apostrophe to the elements; the theory of the fine arts, and of poetry in particular, could not, I thought, but derive some additional and important light. It would in its immediate effects furnish a torch of guidance to the philosophical critic; and ultimately to the poet himself. In energetic minds, truth soon changes by domestication into power; and from directing in the discrimination and appraisal of the product, becomes influence in the production. To admire on principle, is the only way to imitate without loss of originality. \* \* \*

#### CHAPTER XIV

DURING the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbors, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moon-light or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself—to which of us I do not recollect—that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as

<sup>1</sup>Quoted (with omissions) from *The Friend*, No. 5. In a note Coleridge justifies quoting from an already-published work of his own.

<sup>2</sup>*Venice Preserved*, Act V. Otway wrote "laurels," not "lobsters."

<sup>3</sup>*Lear*, III, iv, 65.

will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*; in which it was agreed that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote *The Ancient Mariner*, and was preparing among other poems, *The Dark Ladie*, and the *Christabel*, in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the *Lyrical Ballads* were published; and were presented by him, as an experiment, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of style that were not included in

what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being: had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found, too, not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by its religious fervor. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface in the sense attributed to them and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater part of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as



the source of a controversy, in which I have been honored more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with his opinions, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself, in kind, and in essence.

The office of philosophical disquisition consists in just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical process of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity in which they actually co-exist; and this is the result of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by meter, or by rime, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well-known enumeration of the days in the several-months:

Thirty days hath September,  
April, June, and November, *etc.*,

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm superadded, whatever be their contents, may be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may result from the attain-

ment of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the *Bathyllus* even of an Anacreon, or the *Alexis* of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere superaddition of meter, with or without rime, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If meter be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such, as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so-deduced, may be thus worded: A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure not truth; and from all other species—having *this* object in common with it—it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem which is rime, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I

answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distiches, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, disjoins it from its context, and makes it a separate whole, instead of an harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasureable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air;—at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. *Præcipitandus est liber spiritus*,<sup>1</sup> says Petronius most happily. The epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of Plato, and Bishop Taylor,<sup>2</sup> and the *Theoria Sacra* of Burnet,<sup>3</sup> furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without meter, and even without the contradistinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah—indeed a very large portion of the whole book—is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever specific import we attach to the word, Poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary conse-

quence, that a poem of any length neither can be, or ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved in *keeping* with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement as will partake of *one*, though not a *peculiar* property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in the preceding disquisition on the Fancy and Imagination. What is poetry? is so nearly the same question with, What is a poet? that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of Imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control (*laxis effertur habenis*)<sup>4</sup> reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. "Doubtless," as Sir John Davies observes of the soul—and his words may with slight alteration be applied,

<sup>1</sup>A free spirit must be urged forward. (From the *Satyricon*, according to H. N. Coleridge's edition of 1847.)

<sup>2</sup>Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667).

<sup>3</sup>Bishop Thomas Burnet (1635–1715), whose *Telluris Theoria Sacra* (1681–1689; English translation, 1684–1689) was a fanciful theory of the earth's structure. Wordsworth also knew the book.

<sup>4</sup>Driven with loosened reins.

and even more appropriately, to the poetic Imagination—

Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns  
Bodies to spirit by sublimation strange,  
As fire converts to fire the things it burns,  
As we our food into our nature change.

From their gross matter she abstracts their forms,  
And draws a kind of quintessence from things;  
Which to her proper nature she transforms,  
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

Thus does she, when from individual states  
She doth abstract the universal kinds;  
Which then re-clothed in divers names and fates  
Steal access through our senses to our minds.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life, and Imagination the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

#### CHAPTER XVII

AS FAR then as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the *dramatic* propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot likewise but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the

majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conducted not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in *any* sense this rule is applicable only to *certain* classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense as hath never by any

<sup>1</sup>*Nosce Teipsum* (1599), Of the Soul of Man and the Immortality Thereof, Stanzas 8–10 of the section entitled "That it cannot be a Body." Coleridge has made numerous changes from Davies' text.



one (as far as I know or have read) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is *practicable*, yet as a *rule* it is useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practiced. The poet informs his reader that he had generally chosen *low and rustic* life; but not as low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy imitation of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in *fact*, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the representation, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an imitation as distinguished from a mere copy. The third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained, sometimes actual clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that character. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."<sup>1</sup>

Now it is clear to me, that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as *The Brothers*, *Michael*, *Ruth*, *The Mad Mother*, etc., the persons introduced are by no means taken from low or rustic life in the common accep-

tation of those words; and it is not less clear that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal I rank that Independence, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, Education, which has rendered few books familiar, but the Bible, and the Liturgy or Hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far accidental, that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of probability that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned: the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing *their* style."<sup>2</sup>

It is, moreover, to be considered that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, negations involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced, that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is prerequisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labors. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants:

<sup>2</sup>*Enthusiasmus Triumphatus*, Sec. XXXV. (Coleridge.) More (1614-1687) was one of the group known as the Cambridge Platonists. This book was published in 1656. Its sub-title is: "A Discourse of the Nature, Causes, Kinds, and Cure of Enthusiasm."

and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the farmers are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point, to which all the lines of difference converge as to their source and center—I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulgated in this preface.—I adopt with full faith, the principle of Aristotle, that poetry, as poetry, is essentially *ideal*, that it avoids and excludes all *accident*; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of the class: not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he would possess. If my premises are right and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of *The Brothers*, that of

the shepherd of Green-head Ghyll in the *Michael*, have all the verisimilitude and representative quality that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class. Take *Michael* for instance:

An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,  
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,  
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt  
And watchful more than ordinary men.  
Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,  
Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes  
When others heeded not, he heard the South  
Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,  
"The winds are now devising work for me!"  
And truly, at all times, the storm, that drives  
The traveler to a shelter, summoned him  
Up to the mountains: he had been alone  
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
That came to him and left him on the heights.  
So lived he, until his eightieth year was past.  
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose  
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,  
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.  
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed  
The common air; the hills, which he so oft  
Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had im-  
pressed

So many incidents upon his mind  
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;  
Which, like a book, preserved the memory  
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,  
So grateful in themselves, the certainty  
Of honorable gain; these fields, these hills  
Which were his living being, even more  
Than his own blood—what could they less? had  
laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched at a lower note, as the *Harry Gill*, and *The Idiot Boy*, the feelings are those of human nature in general; though the poet has judiciously laid the scene in the country, in order to place himself in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In *The Idiot Boy*,

indeed, the mother's character is not so much a real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgment. Hence the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless: at least, they are the only plausible objections, which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of ordinary morbid idiocy, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He was even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the boy is so evenly balanced by the folly of the mother, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile<sup>1</sup> dotage, than an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In *The Thorn*, the poet himself acknowledges in a note the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have portrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man moderately imaginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings, "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men having nothing to do become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem—and the Nurse in Shakespeare's *Roméo and Juliet* alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic poetry, if indeed the Nurse itself can be deemed altogether a case in point—it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser, without repeating the effects of dullness and garrulity. However this may be, I dare assert that the parts—and these form the far larger portion of the whole—which might as well or still better have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own character, are

those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza;<sup>2</sup> the seven last lines of the tenth;<sup>3</sup> and the five following stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory by which the choice of characters was to be directed, not only *a priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself need be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither admit as particular fact, or as general rule. "The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions." To this I reply; that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far reconstructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar—which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials—will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more

<sup>2</sup>"I've measured it from side to side;  
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide."

<sup>3</sup>"Nay, rack your brain—'tis all in vain,  
I'll tell you everything I know;  
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond  
Which is a little step beyond,  
I wish that you would go:  
Perhaps, when you are at the place,  
You something of her tale may trace."

(Coleridge also quotes the stanzas next mentioned, but these two passages sufficiently illustrate his criticism.)

<sup>1</sup>Old-woman'sh.



indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration—equally important though less obvious—that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey insulated facts, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things and modes of action requisite for his bodily conveniences would alone be individualized; while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed, or

reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes of the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to particularize many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, “accordingly, such a language”—meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism—“arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression”; it may be answered, that the language, which he has in view, can be attributed to rustics with no greater right, than the style of Hooker<sup>1</sup> or Bacon to Tom Brown<sup>2</sup> or Sir Roger L’Estrange.<sup>3</sup> Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same. Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feeling.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader that the positions which I controvert are contained in the sentences—“a selection of the real language of men”;—“the language of these men” (*i.e.*, men in low and rustic life)

<sup>1</sup>Richard Hooker (1554?–1600), author of the treatise *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.

<sup>2</sup>Born 1663, died 1704; translator of the *Comical Romance* of Scarron, and author of many burlesque pieces in prose and verse.

<sup>3</sup>Born c. 1617, died 1705; journalist, pamphleteer, author of controversial works remarkable chiefly for their scurrility.

"I propose to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men." "Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference." It is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney<sup>1</sup> differs not at all from that which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train, of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one nor the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real" therefore, we must substitute ordinary, or *lingua communis*.<sup>2</sup> And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty, as would be required in adapting to the same purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools;

or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, or barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*.<sup>3</sup> Anterior to cultivation the *lingua communis* of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists everywhere in parts, and nowhere as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "in a state of excitement." For the nature of a man's words, where he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to create; but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or—which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement—whatever generalizations of truth or experience the heat of passion may produce; yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or, in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIII. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the *apparent* tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. "At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell where he bowed, there he fell down dead."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Born c. 1622, beheaded for alleged treason 1683. He was active on the Puritan side in the Civil War, held office under Cromwell, and was an able political theorist, advocating the republican form of government.

<sup>2</sup>Common tongue.

<sup>3</sup>For the public good.

<sup>4</sup>Judges, v, 27.

## CHAPTER XVIII

I CONCLUDE, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at least understand; but likewise by following the *order*, in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power, by the greater disjunction and separation in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that surviue, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza on which I have chanced to open, in the *Lyrical Ballads*. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

In distant countries have I been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy man, a man full grown,  
Weep in the public roads, alone.  
But such a one, on English ground,  
And in the broad highway, I met;  
Along the broad highway he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet:  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;  
And in his arms a lamb he had.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This is the first stanza of Wordsworth's poem, *The Last of the Flock*.

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order*, in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously deceived, if the following less compact mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," etc., etc. But when I turn to the following stanza in *The Thorn*:

At all times of the day and night  
This wretched woman thither goes;  
And she is known to every star,  
And every wind that blows:  
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits,  
When the blue day-light's in the skies,  
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And to herself she cries,  
Oh misery! Oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! Oh misery!

and compare this with the language of ordinary men; or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in real life, from such a narrator, as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences; I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which Milton, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair specimen of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

The Vision and the Faculty divine.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

<sup>2</sup>Wordsworth, *Excursion*, I, 79.



## CHARLES LAMB (1775-1834)

Lamb's father was a clerk and confidential servant of a barrister, and lived with his family in rooms in the Inner Temple, London, where Charles Lamb was born on 10 February, 1775, the youngest of seven children. Of these only two besides Charles survived childhood—John and Mary, who were respectively twelve and ten years older than Charles. In the Temple Lamb passed the first seven years of his life, and then, through the fortunate interest of one of the governors of Christ's Hospital, was admitted to that school, where he remained until he was fourteen. This was the sum of his formal education, which included a very fair knowledge of Latin and some knowledge of Greek. At Christ's Hospital, too, Lamb formed several lasting friendships, perhaps the closest and certainly the most significant being that with Coleridge. Lamb was never blind to Coleridge's faults, small and large—he described him as an "archangel, a little damaged"—but, like most of Coleridge's other friends, he was deeply impressed by him, and when Coleridge died he wrote: "I feel how great a part he was of me. His great and dear spirit haunts me. I cannot think a thought, I cannot make a criticism on men or books, without an ineffectual turning and reference to him. He was the proof and touchstone of all my cogitations." After leaving Christ's Hospital Lamb obtained a minor post in the South Sea House, where his brother John was employed. A couple of years later, in 1792, he became a clerk in the employ of the East India Company—a position in which he faithfully served until 1825, when the directors of the company retired him on a pension. Thus Lamb's life was passed in London. In his childhood and youth he made occasional visits into the country in Hertfordshire, where his grandmother was house-keeper at Blakesware, a country home of the Plumer family; and there, possibly in the near-by village of Widford, he saw and fell in love with the "fair Alice" of *Dream Children*, whom he could not marry. Later in life, too, he spent some of his brief vacations in the country, but to London he always returned with joy—"London," as he wrote to a Cambridge friend, "whose dirtiest drab-frequented alley, and her lowest-bowing tradesman, I would not exchange for Skiddaw, Helvellyn, James, Walter, and the parson into the bargain. O! her lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print-shops, toy-shops, mercers, hardware men, pastry-cooks, St. Paul's Church-Yard, the Strand, Exeter Change, Charing Cross,

with the man *upon* a black horse! These are thy gods, O London! Ain't you mightily moped on the banks of the Cam? Had you not better come and set up here? You can't think what a difference. All the streets and pavements are pure gold, I warrant you. At least, I know an alchemy that turns her mud into that metal—a mind that loves to be at home in crowds."

Yet life in his beloved London was in one respect a never-ending tragedy to Lamb. There was a strain of insanity in his family which attacked him in the winter of 1795-1796. After it was over he could be merry enough about it, as he could so fortunately be merry over almost everything else. "My life," he wrote Coleridge, "has been somewhat diversified of late. The six weeks that finished last year and began this, your very humble servant spent very agreeably in a mad-house at Hoxton. I am got somewhat rational now, and don't bite any one. But mad I was!" Insanity never attacked Lamb again, but in September, 1796, his sister suddenly became mad and, in Lamb's presence, stabbed their mother to death and wounded their father. Later she recovered her sanity, but always after that she was subject to recurrent fits of madness, and Lamb sacrificed his life to her welfare, becoming responsible for her and caring for her tenderly until his own death on 27 December, 1834.

In the earlier years of their life together the two were very poor, and it was in the hope of increasing their income that Lamb published *A Tale of Rosamund Gray* in 1798. This, however, brought in very little money, and Lamb next attempted to write plays; but he could not get his tragedy, *John Woodvil*, accepted by any theatrical manager, while his comedy, *Mr. H.*, was hissed down as a failure on the first, and only, night of its performance at Drury Lane, Lamb himself joining in the hisses. Several years later William Godwin commissioned the Lambs to write a book for children, and this was immediately successful upon its publication in 1807. It was the *Tales from Shakespeare*, in which Mary Lamb did the comedies and Charles the tragedies. In the following year Lamb published his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Contemporary with Shakespeare*, which was a not unimportant manifesto of the English romantic movement, and in which Lamb finely exhibited his powers as a critic. But his most fully characteristic work was yet to come. This was the series of *Essays of Elia* contributed to the *London Magazine* in 1820-

1822 and published as a book in 1823. A second group of his essays was published as the *Last Essays of Elia* in 1833. In these essays Lamb wrote at his ease in a style more intimately personal than had been usual with essayists before his day, and on topics which he freely chose for himself. No analysis is likely to succeed in disentangling their charm; for one reader it may lie chiefly in their quaint bookish flavor derived from

Lamb's wide reading in seventeenth-century literature, for another it may lie in their vein of sensibility at once delicate and tender, and for still another it may lie in Lamb's odd, irrepressible humor. Yet the majority of Lamb's readers are probably content not to ask such questions; for of him it is truer than of most writers that there are no half-way measures with him—if one likes him at all one loves him.

## THE TWO RACES OF MEN<sup>1</sup>

THE human species, according to the best theory I can form of it, is composed of two distinct races, *the men who borrow*, and *the men who lend*. To these two original diversities may be reduced all those impertinent classifications of Gothic and Celtic tribes, white men, black men, red men. All the dwellers upon earth, "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,"<sup>2</sup> flock hither, and do naturally fall in with one or other of these primary distinctions. The infinite superiority of the former, which I choose to designate as the *great race*, is discernible in their figure, port, and a certain instinctive sovereignty. The latter are born degraded. "He shall serve his brethren."<sup>3</sup> There is something in the air of one of this cast, lean and suspicious; contrasting with the open, trusting, generous manners of the other.

Observe who have been the greatest borrowers of all ages—Alcibiades<sup>4</sup>—Falstaff—Sir Richard Steele—our late incomparable Brinsley<sup>5</sup>—what a family likeness in all four!

What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower! what rosy gills! what a beauti-

<sup>1</sup>The first five of the essays here printed come from *Elia* (1823), the sixth and the *Popular Fallacies* from *The Last Essays of Elia* (1833). All of them were published in periodicals before being collected into books, the first six in the *London Magazine* and the *Popular Fallacies* in the *New Monthly Magazine*. Elia was the name of an Italian who had been a clerk in the South Sea House when Lamb was there (before 1792). Lamb explained why he began using this pseudonym in a letter to the publisher of the *London Magazine* concerning *The South Sea House* (the earliest of the *Elia* essays): "Having a brother now there, and doubting how he might relish certain descriptions in it, I clapped down the name of Elia to it, which passed off pretty well, for Elia himself added the function of an author to that of a scrivener, like myself. I went the other day (not having seen him [Elia] for a year) to laugh over with him at my usurpation of his name, and found him, alas! no more than a name, for he died of consumption eleven months ago, and I knew not of it. So the name has fairly devolved on me, I think; and 'tis all he has left me."

<sup>2</sup>Acts, ii, 9.

<sup>3</sup>Genesis, ix, 25.

<sup>4</sup>Athenian general, 450-404 B. C.

<sup>5</sup>Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), playwright and wit.

ful reliance on Providence doth he manifest—taking no more thought than lilies!<sup>6</sup> What contempt for money—accounting it (yours and mine especially) no better than dross! What a liberal confounding of those pedantic distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*!<sup>7</sup> or rather, what a noble simplification of language (beyond Tooke<sup>8</sup>), resolving these supposed opposites into one clear, intelligible pronoun adjective!—What near approaches doth he make to the primitive *community*<sup>9</sup>—to the extent of one-half of the principle at least!

He is the true taxer who "calleth all the world up to be taxed";<sup>10</sup> and the distance is as vast between him and *one of us*, as subsisted betwixt the Augustan Majesty and the poorest obolary Jew<sup>11</sup> that paid it tribute-pittance at Jerusalem!—His exactions, too, have such a cheerful, voluntary air! So far removed from your sour parochial or state-gatherers—those ink-horn varlets, who carry their want of welcome in their faces! He cometh to you with a smile, and troubleth you with no receipt; confining himself to no set season. Every day is his Candlemas,<sup>12</sup> or his Feast of Holy Michael. He applieth the *lene tormentum*<sup>13</sup> of a pleasant look to your purse—which to that gentle warmth expands her silken leaves, as naturally as the cloak of the traveler, for which sun and wind contended! He is the true Propontic<sup>14</sup> which never ebbereth! The sea which taketh handsomely at each man's hand. In vain the victim, whom he delighteth to honor, struggles with destiny; he is in the net. Lend

<sup>6</sup>St. Matthew, vi, 28.

<sup>7</sup>Mine and thine.

<sup>8</sup>John Horne Tooke (1736-1812), politician and philologist, who published his philological theories in *The Diversions of Purley*.

<sup>9</sup>*L. e.*, communism.

<sup>10</sup>St. Luke, ii, 1.

<sup>11</sup>*L. e.*, between the Emperor Augustus and the Jew who paid an obolus (about 3 cents).

<sup>12</sup>2nd February, a quarter-day, for the payment of rents, in Scotland. Michaelmas, 29 September, is an English quarter-day.

<sup>13</sup>Gentle stimulus.

<sup>14</sup>The Sea of Marmora, which has no tides.

therefore cheerfully, O man ordained to lend—that thou lose not in the end, with thy worldly penny, the reversion promised. Combine not preposterously in thine own person the penalties of Lazarus and of Dives!<sup>1</sup>—but, when thou seest the proper authority coming, meet it smilingly, as it were half-way. Come, a handsome sacrifice! See how light *he* makes of it! Strain not courtesies with a noble enemy.

Reflections like the foregoing were forced upon my mind by the death of my old friend, Ralph Bigod,<sup>2</sup> Esq., who departed this life on Wednesday evening; dying, as he had lived, without much trouble. He boasted himself a descendant from mighty ancestors of that name, who heretofore held ducal dignities in this realm. In his actions and sentiments he belied not the stock to which he pretended. Early in life he found himself invested with ample revenues; which, with that noble disinterestedness which I have noticed as inherent in men of the *great race*, he took almost immediate measures entirely to dissipate and bring to nothing: for there is something revolting in the idea of a king holding a private purse; and the thoughts of Bigod were all regal. Thus furnished, by the very act of disfigurement; getting rid of the cumberstone luggage of riches, more apt (as one sings)

To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,  
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise,<sup>3</sup>

he set forth, like some Alexander, upon his great enterprise, “borrowing and to borrow!”

In his periegesis,<sup>4</sup> or triumphant progress throughout this island, it has been calculated that he laid a tithe<sup>5</sup> part of the inhabitants under contribution. I reject this estimate as greatly exaggerated—but having had the honor of accompanying my friend divers times, in his perambulations about this vast city, I own I was greatly struck at first with the prodigious number of faces we met, who claimed a sort of respectful acquaintance with us. He was one day so obliging as to explain the phenomenon. It seems, these were his tributaries; feeders of his exchequer; gentlemen, his good friends (as he was pleased to express himself), to whom he had occasion-

ally been beholden for a loan. Their multitudes did in no way disconcert him. He rather took a pride in numbering them; and, with Comus, seemed pleased to be “stocked with so fair a herd.”

With such sources, it was a wonder how he contrived to keep his treasury always empty. He did it by force of an aphorism, which he had often in his mouth, that “money kept longer than three days stinks.” So he made use of it while it was fresh. A good part he drank away (for he was an excellent toss-pot), some he gave away, the rest he threw away, literally tossing and hurling it violently from him—as boys do burrs, or as if it had been infectious,—into ponds, or ditches, or deep holes,—inscrutable cavities of the earth;—or he would bury it (where he would never seek it again) by a river’s side under some bank, which (he would facetiously observe) paid no interest—but out away from him it must go peremptorily, as Hagar’s offspring<sup>6</sup> into the wilderness, while it was sweet. He never missed it. The streams were perennial which fed his fisc.<sup>7</sup> When new supplies became necessary, the first person that had the felicity to fall in with him, friend or stranger, was sure to contribute to the deficiency. For Bigod had an *undeniable* way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with gray (*cana fides*<sup>8</sup>). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And, waiving for a while my theory as to the *great race*, I would put it to the most untheorizing reader, who may at times have disposable coin in his pocket, whether it is not more repugnant to the kindness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say *no* to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower), who, by his mumping visnomy,<sup>9</sup> tells you that he expects nothing better; and, therefore, whose preconceived notions and expectations you do in reality so much less shock in the refusal.

When I think of this man; his fiery glow of heart; his swell of feeling; how magnificent, how *ideal* he was; how great at the midnight hour; and when I compare with him the companions with whom I have associated since, I grudge the saving of a few idle ducats,<sup>10</sup> and

<sup>1</sup>St. Luke, xvi, 10–31.

<sup>2</sup>I. e., John Fenwick, a friend of the Lambs who was usually in financial difficulties.

<sup>3</sup>*Paradise Regained*, Bk. II, ll. 455–6.

<sup>4</sup>Journey round. <sup>5</sup>Tenth.

<sup>6</sup>Ishmael, Genesis, xxi, 9.

<sup>7</sup>Purse.

<sup>8</sup>The gray hair of honor. Cf. *Æneid*, Bk. I, l. 292.

<sup>9</sup>Begging physiognomy.

<sup>10</sup>Coins; originally, Italian coins.



think that I am fallen into the society of lenders, and little men.

To one like Elia, whose treasures are rather cased in leather covers than closed in iron coffers, there is a class of alienators<sup>1</sup> more formidable than that which I have touched upon; I mean your borrowers of books—those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes. There is Comberbatch,<sup>2</sup> matchless in his depre- 10 dations!

That foul gap in the bottom shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out—(you are now with me in my little back study in Bloomsbury,<sup>3</sup> reader!)—with the huge 15 Switzer-like<sup>4</sup> tomes on each side (like the Guildhall giants, in their reformed posture, guardant of nothing) once held the tallest of my folios, *Opera Bonaventuræ*,<sup>5</sup> choice and massy divinity, to which its two supporters 20 (school<sup>6</sup> divinity also, but of a lesser caliber—Bellarmine,<sup>7</sup> and Holy Thomas<sup>8</sup>), showed but as dwarfs,—itself an Ascapart!<sup>9</sup>—that Comberbatch abstracted upon the faith of a theory he holds, which is more easy, I confess, 25 for me to suffer by than to refute, namely, that “the title to property in a book (my Bonaventure, for instance), is in exact ratio to the claimant’s powers of understanding and appreciating the same.” Should he go 30 on acting upon this theory, which of our shelves is safe?

The slight vacuum in the left-hand case—two shelves from the ceiling—scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser 35 —was whilom the commodious resting-place of Brown on Urn Burial.<sup>10</sup> C. will hardly allege that he knows more about that treatise than I do, who introduced it to him, and was indeed the first (of the moderns) to 40 discover its beauties—but so have I known a foolish lover to praise his mistress in the presence of a rival more qualified to carry her off than himself.—Just below, Dodsley’s

dramas<sup>11</sup> want their fourth volume, where Vittoria Corombona is! The remainder nine are as distasteful as Priam’s refuse sons, when the Fates borrowed Hector. Here stood the Anatomy of Melancholy,<sup>12</sup> in sober state.—There loitered the Complete Angler,<sup>13</sup> quiet as in life, by some stream side.—In yonder nook, John Bunce,<sup>14</sup> a widower-volume, with “eyes closed,” mourns his ravished mate.

One justice I must do my friend, that if he sometimes, like the sea, sweeps away a treasure, at another time, sea-like, he throws up as rich an equivalent to match it. I have a small under-collection of this nature (my friend’s gatherings in his various calls), picked up, he has forgotten at what odd places, and deposited with as little memory at mine. I take in these orphans, the twice-deserted. These proselytes of the gate are welcome as the true Hebrews. There they stand in conjunction; natives, and naturalized. The latter seem as little disposed to inquire out their true lineage as I am.—I charge no warehouse-room for these deodands,<sup>15</sup> nor shall ever put myself to the ungentlemanly trouble of advertising a sale of them to pay expenses.

To lose a volume to C. carries some sense and meaning in it. You are sure that he will make one hearty meal on your viands, if he can give no account of the platter after it. But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful K.,<sup>16</sup> to be so importunate to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle?<sup>17</sup>—knowing at the time, and knowing that I knew also, thou most assuredly wouldst never turn over one leaf of the illustrious folio:—what but the mere spirit of contradiction, and childish love of getting the better of thy friend?—Then, worst cut of all! to transport it with thee to the Gallican land—

Unworthy land to harbor such a sweetness,  
A virtue in which all ennobling thoughts dwelt,

<sup>11</sup>Robert Dodsley (1703–1764) edited a collection of plays, among which was John Webster’s *The White Devil*, or *Vittoria Corombona* (1612).

<sup>12</sup>By Robert Burton (1577–1640).

<sup>13</sup>By Izaak Walton (1593–1683).

<sup>14</sup>By Thomas Amory (1691?–1788).

<sup>15</sup>In English law a thing which, having caused the death of a person, was forfeited to the Crown for pious uses.

<sup>16</sup>James Kenney (1780–1840), a dramatist, at this time living in France.

<sup>17</sup>The first Duchess of Newcastle (1624–1673).

<sup>1</sup>Takers of one’s property.

<sup>2</sup>Coleridge, who when he enlisted in a regiment of dragoons assumed the name of Silas Titus Comberback.

<sup>3</sup>A section of London in which Lamb was *not* living when he wrote this.

<sup>4</sup>*I. e.*, very large. <sup>5</sup>The Works of St. Bonaventura.

<sup>6</sup>Scholastic. <sup>7</sup>Italian Cardinal, lived 1542–1621.

<sup>8</sup>St. Thomas Aquinas, 1227–1274.

<sup>9</sup>A giant thirty feet in height. He appears in *Betis of Hampton*.

<sup>10</sup>Sir Thomas Browne’s *Hydriotaphia, or Urn-Burial*.

Pure thoughts, kind thoughts, high thoughts, her sex's wonder!

—hadst thou not thy play-books, and books of jests and fancies, about thee, to keep thee merry, even as thou keepest all companies with thy quips and mirthful tales?—Child of the Green-room, it was unkindly done of thee. Thy wife, too, that part-French, better-part-Englishwoman!—that *she* could fix upon no other treatise to bear away in kindly token of remembering us, than the works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brook<sup>1</sup>—of which no Frenchman, nor woman of France, Italy, or England, was ever by nature constituted to comprehend a tittle! *Was there not Zimmerman<sup>2</sup> on Solitude?*

Reader, if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C.—he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious MSS. of his—(in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not infrequently, vying with the originals)—in no very clerklly hand—legible in my Daniel;<sup>3</sup> in old Burton; in Sir Thomas Browne; and those obstruser cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands.—I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library, against S. T. C.

## A CHAPTER ON EARS

I HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader,—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes<sup>4</sup> to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

<sup>1</sup>Lived 1554–1628, the friend and biographer of Sir Philip Sidney.

<sup>2</sup>Johann Georg von Zimmermann (1728–1795), a Swiss physician.

<sup>3</sup>Samuel Daniel (1562–1619).

<sup>4</sup>Spiral decorations on the tops of columns of the Ionic and Corinthian orders.

Neither have I incurred, nor done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel “quite unabashed,”<sup>5</sup> and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory, nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean—for *music*.—To say that this heart never melted at the concourse of sweet sounds,<sup>6</sup> would be a foul self-libel.—“*Water parted from the sea*” never fails to move it strangely. So does “*In infancy*.”<sup>7</sup> But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman—the gentlest, sure, that ever merited the appellation—the sweetest—why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S—, once the blooming Fanny Weatherall of the Temple—who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion, that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment, which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite, for Alice W—n.<sup>8</sup>

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practicing “*God save the King*” all my life; whistling and humming of it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For, thrumming, in my wild way, on my friend A.’s<sup>10</sup> piano, the other morning, while

<sup>5</sup>On the first publication of this paper Lamb quoted in a note, from Pope’s *Dunciad* (II, 147), “Earless on high stood unabashed Defoe.” Defoe was pilloried for his tract, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, but he never had his ears cropped.

<sup>6</sup>*Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 84.

<sup>7</sup>Both are songs from Arne’s opera *Artaxerxes* (see Lamb’s *My First Play*).

<sup>8</sup>Mrs. Spinkes. Nothing is known of her save her name.

<sup>9</sup>According to a key Lamb made for a fellow clerk at the East India House this name is Alice Winterton, but Lamb adds that the name is feigned. It has been suggested that Lamb means Ann Simmons, of Blenheims, near Blakesware, but Mr. E. V. Lucas thinks “that Alice W—n was more an abstraction around which now and then to group tender imaginings of what might have been than any tangible figure.”

<sup>10</sup>Probably William Ayrton (1777–1818), musical critic and a friend of Lamb’s.

he was engaged in an adjoining parlor,—on his return he was pleased to say, “*he thought it could not be the maid!*” On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, 5 his suspicions had lighted on *Jenny*. But a grace, snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being,—technically perhaps deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts,—had swayed the keys to a mood which *Jenny*, with all her (less cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend’s penetration, and not with any view of dis- 15 paraging *Jenny*.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in 20 voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough bass<sup>1</sup> I contrive to guess at, from its being supereminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of *that* which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to say I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio*<sup>2</sup> stand in the like relation of obscurity to me; 30 and *Sol*, *Fa*, *Mi*, *Re*,<sup>3</sup> is as conjuring as *Baraliphton*.<sup>4</sup>

It is hard to stand alone—in an age like this,—(constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I 35 verily believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal tumbled upon the gamut<sup>5</sup>)—to remain, as it were, singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, 40 and refining the passions.—Yet rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter’s hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset

sounds are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single strokes; willingly enduring stripes, while it hath no task to con.<sup>6</sup> To music it cannot be passive. It will strive—mine at least will—’spite of its inaptitude, to thrid<sup>7</sup> the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest, common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician<sup>8</sup> becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth’s Laughing Audience!) immovable, or affecting some faint emotion—till (as some have said that 25 our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold Theater in Hades, where some of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment*; or like that—

————Party in a parlor,  
All silent, and all DAMNED!<sup>9</sup>

Above all, those insufferable concertos, and 35 pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying, to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and be 45 forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*,<sup>10</sup> and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an

<sup>1</sup>*I. e.*, a bass voice. Lamb does not use the phrase in its technical sense.

<sup>2</sup>“Sustained” and “slow.” <sup>3</sup>Names of notes.

<sup>4</sup>*I. e.*, as mysterious as an arbitrary term in logic.

<sup>5</sup>Musical scale. See Genesis, iv, 21.

<sup>6</sup>To attend to. <sup>7</sup>Thread.

<sup>8</sup>The allusion is to Hogarth’s picture of a musician driven almost mad by street noises.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted from the first edition of Wordsworth’s *Peter Bell*. The stanza containing these lines was omitted in later editions.

<sup>10</sup>All marks of punctuation, with no words.



inexplicable rambling mime<sup>1</sup>—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor, and the oppression. Like that disappointing book in Patmos;<sup>2</sup> or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton,<sup>3</sup> doth music make her first insinuating approaches:—"Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error*."<sup>4</sup> A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.—So delightful these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them—winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humors, until at last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations, and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*,<sup>5</sup> discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else: continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now, by no means, no labor, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of it, they cannot resist."

Something like this "SCENE-TURNING" I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov*—

<sup>1</sup>An actor playing a part without words.

<sup>2</sup>Revelation, x, 10.

<sup>3</sup>*Anatomy of Melancholy*, I, xi, ii, 6.

<sup>4</sup>"Delightful madness," and "most pleasing deception of the mind." (Both phrases come from Horace, *Odes* III, iv, 5, and *Epistles* II, ii, 140.)

<sup>5</sup>Awkward shyness (Cicero, *Ad. Fam.* V, xii).

<sup>6</sup>Vincent Novello (1781–1861), organist, father of Mrs. Cowden Clarke.

who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.<sup>7</sup>

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim abbey,<sup>8</sup> some five and thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be *that*, in which the psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings—or *that other*, which with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind<sup>9</sup>)—a holy calm pervadeth me.—I am for the time

———rapt above earth,

And possess joys not promised at my birth.<sup>10</sup>

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive,—impatient to overcome her "earthly" with his "heavenly,"<sup>11</sup>—still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated,<sup>12</sup> ride those Arions *Haydn* and *Mozart*, with their attendant tritons,<sup>13</sup> *Bach*, *Beethoven*, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps,—I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wit's end;—clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me—priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me—the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils—a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, late so naked, so ingenuous—he is Pope,—and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a

<sup>7</sup>I have been there, and still would go;

<sup>8</sup>'Tis like a little heaven below.—*Dr. Watts*.

(Lamb's Note. From *Divine Songs for Children*, 28th Song.)

<sup>9</sup>Westminster Abbey.

<sup>10</sup>These anthems are based on Psalms LV and CXIX respectively.

<sup>11</sup>Quoted by Walton, *Compleat Angler*, I, iv.

<sup>12</sup>I Corinthians, xv, 48.

<sup>13</sup>According to legend the Lesbian musician Arion, when threatened with death by sailors, so charmed a dolphin with his playing that the dolphin carried him on its back safely to land.

<sup>14</sup>Sea-gods, attendants of Neptune.

she-Pope too,—tri-coronated like himself!—I am converted, and yet a Protestant;—at once *malleus hereticorum*,<sup>1</sup> and myself grand heresiarch;<sup>2</sup> or three heresies center in my person:—I am Marcion, Ebion, and Cerinthus<sup>3</sup>—Gog and Magog<sup>4</sup>—what not?—till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran<sup>5</sup> beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.

## DREAM-CHILDREN; A REVERIE<sup>6</sup>

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk<sup>7</sup> (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood.<sup>8</sup> Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Red-breasts,<sup>9</sup> till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding.

<sup>1</sup>The heretics' hammer. The title was given to Johann Faber (1478-1531) because of his treatise, bearing the same title, against Luther.

<sup>2</sup>Leader in heresy.

<sup>3</sup>Heretics in the early days of Christianity.

<sup>4</sup>Unbelievers. See Revelation, xx, 7-9.

<sup>5</sup>*I. e.*, protestant.

<sup>6</sup>Lamb's brother John died on 26 October, 1821, and Lamb is believed to have begun this essay shortly afterwards, in a mood of reminiscence and reverie.

<sup>7</sup>The house is Blakesware, really in Hertfordshire, where Mary Field, Lamb's grandmother, was housekeeper.

<sup>8</sup>The scene of this legend is the county of Norfolk, a fact which may have induced Lamb to choose Norfolk in seeking to disguise the identity of Blakesware.

<sup>9</sup>Which, at the close of the ballad, cover with leaves the bodies of the murdered children.

Then I went on to say how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter<sup>10</sup> by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm"; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious

<sup>10</sup>Psalter, the Book of Psalms.

as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Twelve Caesars,<sup>1</sup> that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples,<sup>2</sup> which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L—,<sup>3</sup> because he was so handsome and spirited youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like

some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarreling with him (for we quarreled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb.<sup>4</sup> Here the children fell a crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n;<sup>5</sup> and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentation, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright

<sup>1</sup>The Roman Emperors from Julius Cæsar to Domitian.

<sup>2</sup>Fir cones.

<sup>3</sup>Lamb's brother.

<sup>4</sup>This, as far as is known, did not actually happen.

<sup>5</sup>Concerning this name see note to *A Chapter on Ears*.



hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, 5 strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech; "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum<sup>1</sup> father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only 10 what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe<sup>2</sup> millions of ages before we have existence, and a name"—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had 15 fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

## THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

I LIKE to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those 25 tender novices, blooming through their first nigrity,<sup>3</sup> the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek—such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep* 30 *peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning toward these dim sweeps—poor blots—innocent blacknesses— 35

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth—these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth<sup>4</sup> without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach 40 a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the 45 *fauces Averni*<sup>5</sup>—to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades!—to shudder

with the idea that "now, surely, he must be lost for ever!"—to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight—and then (O fullness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly; not much unlike the old stage direction in *Macbeth*,<sup>6</sup> where the "Apparition of a child crowned with a tree in his hand rises."

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give 15 him a penny. It is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair 20 of kibed<sup>7</sup> heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.<sup>8</sup>

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 25 *'yclept*<sup>9</sup> *sassafras*. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this "wholesome and pleasant beverage, on the south side of Fleet Street, as 35 thou approachest Bridge Street—the only *Salopian house*,"<sup>10</sup>—I have never yet ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients—a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation 45 of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper—whether the oily particles (*sassafras* is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften 50 the fuliginous<sup>11</sup> concretions, which are some-

<sup>1</sup>Ann Simmons married a Mr. Bartrum, or Bartram, a London pawnbroker.

<sup>2</sup>The river of forgetfulness, in Hades. In the *Æneid* (VI, 703–751) Virgil tells how the soul, after many ages and after drinking of this river, returns to earth in a new body.

<sup>3</sup>Blackness.

<sup>4</sup>The dress of their calling.

<sup>5</sup>The jaws of Hell (*Æneid*, VI, 201).

<sup>6</sup>Act IV, sc. i.

<sup>7</sup>Chapped.

<sup>8</sup>Sixpence.

<sup>9</sup>Called.

<sup>10</sup>Saloop was the name of this beverage, whence *salopian*.

<sup>11</sup>Sooty.

times found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood<sup>1</sup> in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive<sup>2</sup>—but so it is, that no possible taste or odor to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals—cats—when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian.<sup>3</sup> There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader—if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact—he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savory mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labors of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honors of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odors. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapors in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop*—the precocious herb-woman's darling—the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas<sup>4</sup>—the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny)—so may thy

culinary fires, eased of the o'er-charged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin<sup>5</sup>—so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingrediened soups—nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation<sup>6</sup> thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness.—In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth—but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pie-man—there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honor of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket, presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to “air” them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I con-

<sup>1</sup>Wormwood.<sup>2</sup>Softener of pain.<sup>3</sup>Or catnip.<sup>4</sup>I. e., to London's fruit and flower market.<sup>5</sup>Sky.<sup>6</sup>Eruption of sparks.



fess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud  
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.<sup>1</sup>

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:—and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguise, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticeships of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for), plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels<sup>2</sup> mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu<sup>3</sup> be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless defiliations.<sup>4</sup>

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle,<sup>5</sup> 30 a few years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius<sup>6</sup>—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, 40 fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; 45 and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to

repose which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

5 Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.—But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it 10 probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still 15 far above his pretensions—is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when 20 he was used to be lapped by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was but now creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*,<sup>7</sup> and resting-place. —By no other theory than by this sentiment 30 of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE<sup>8</sup> was so 35 impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it 40 was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew.<sup>9</sup> Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an 45 elderly stripling would get in among us and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight,

<sup>1</sup>Milton, *Comus*, 221-2.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah, xxxi, 15.

<sup>3</sup>Edward Wortley Montagu (1713-1776), son of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, several times ran away from Westminster School and on one of these occasions became for a time a chimney-sweeper.

<sup>4</sup>Losses of sons.

<sup>5</sup>The Sussex seat of the Dukes of Norfolk.

<sup>6</sup>Ascanius was the son of Æneas, whose mother was Venus.

<sup>7</sup>Cradle.

<sup>8</sup>James White (1775-1820), author of *Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff* (1796). He was a school-fellow of Lamb at Christ's Hospital.

<sup>9</sup>Held at Smithfield on 3 September until its abolition in the middle of the nineteenth century.



indeed, who relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quitted<sup>1</sup> out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment;<sup>2</sup> but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity;<sup>3</sup> but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlors three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savor. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD<sup>4</sup> ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table—for Rochester<sup>5</sup> in his maddest days could not have done the humors of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honor the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula<sup>6</sup> (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing “the gentleman,” and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness.<sup>7</sup> O it was a pleasure to see the sable youngers<sup>8</sup> lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings—how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it “must

to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman’s eating?”—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust,<sup>9</sup> to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good he should lose their custom, with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts—“The King,”—the “Cloth,”<sup>10</sup>—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering;—and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, “May the Brush supersede the Laurel!”<sup>11</sup> All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a “Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,” which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savoriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust—<sup>12</sup>

JAMES WHITE is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

## A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M.<sup>13</sup> was obliging enough to

<sup>1</sup>The soft part of a loaf’s crust, where loaves have touched each other in baking.

<sup>2</sup>*I. e.*, the profession of chimney-sweepers.

<sup>3</sup>The brush is taken to be emblematic of the chimney-sweeper, as the laurel is emblematic of the poet.

<sup>4</sup>*Cymbeline*, IV, ii, 262-3.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas Manning (1772-1840), who spent some years in China. The central idea of this essay is a commonplace, but there is no reason for doubting Lamb’s statement, here and in a letter to Bernard Barton, that he heard it from Manning.

<sup>1</sup>Hurled.

<sup>2</sup>*I. e.*, the garb of a sweep. See St. Matthew, xxii, 11.

<sup>3</sup>The word is used in allusion to Bunyan’s Vanity Fair in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.

<sup>4</sup>John Fenwick, who is also mentioned in *The Two Races of Men*.

<sup>5</sup>The Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), a notorious rake.

<sup>6</sup>Lamb took this name from a character in Ben Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair*.

<sup>7</sup>*Cf. Paradise Lost*, I, 541.

<sup>8</sup>Youngsters.

read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius<sup>1</sup> in the second chapter of his *Mundane Mutations*, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term *Cho-fang*, literally the Cook's holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast<sup>2</sup> for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as youngsters of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian makeshift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed<sup>3</sup> pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labor of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odor assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burned cottage—he had smelt that smell before—in indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young fire-brand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burned his fingers, and

to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—*crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the newborn pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burned me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?"

"O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste—O Lord,"—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled in every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the

<sup>1</sup>Chinese philosopher of the sixth century B.C. The reference is of Lamb's invention.

<sup>2</sup>Beech nuts.

<sup>3</sup>Newly born.

crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretense, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious), both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burned down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Peking, then an considerable assize town.<sup>1</sup> Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given,—to the surprise of the whole court, townfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision: and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on

fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing the houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke,<sup>2</sup> who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.—

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*,<sup>3</sup> I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum*.<sup>4</sup>

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbydehoys<sup>5</sup>—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditie*,<sup>6</sup> the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or *prælude*,<sup>7</sup> of a grunt.

*He must be roasted.* I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!<sup>8</sup>

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in

<sup>2</sup>English philosopher (1632-1704).

<sup>3</sup>World of eatables.

<sup>4</sup>King of dainties.

<sup>5</sup>Youths between boys and men.

<sup>6</sup>Love of dirt.

<sup>7</sup>Prelude.

<sup>8</sup>Skin.

<sup>1</sup>In England the county town in which sessions of a superior court are held.



overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O call it not fat—but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat<sup>1</sup>—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna<sup>1</sup>—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so), so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian<sup>2</sup> result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing<sup>3</sup>—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string!<sup>4</sup>—Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars—<sup>5</sup>

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth!—wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation<sup>6</sup>—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,  
Death came with timely care—<sup>7</sup>

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coalheaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulcher in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of sapor<sup>8</sup>. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth<sup>9</sup> the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteth—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of

her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite<sup>10</sup>—and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertisted, and not to be unraveled without hazard, he is—good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious<sup>11</sup> of banquets. He is all neighbors' fare.

I am one of those who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Ab-sents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"<sup>12</sup>), capons, plovers, brawn,<sup>13</sup> barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them.

I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything."<sup>14</sup> I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavors, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate—It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt,<sup>15</sup> who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a gray-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at

<sup>1</sup>Animal food sent from heaven. Concerning manna see Exodus, xvi, 14-15.

<sup>2</sup>In Greek mythology ambrosia was the food of the gods.

<sup>3</sup>Being cooked.

<sup>4</sup>By which he hangs while roasting.

<sup>5</sup>It was once believed that shooting stars left jellies where they fell.

<sup>6</sup>Ways of life.

<sup>7</sup>Coleridge, *Epitaph on an Infant*.

<sup>8</sup>Flavors.

<sup>9</sup>Takes the skin off.

<sup>10</sup>*I.e.*, she gratifies the taste but does not satisfy the stomach.  
<sup>11</sup>*I. e.*, he gives no guest cause to envy another, for "he is—good throughout."

<sup>12</sup>Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, l. 1695.

<sup>13</sup>Boar's meat.

<sup>14</sup>*King Lear*, II, iv, 253.

<sup>15</sup>Probably Sarah Lamb, whom Lamb called Aunt Hetty.

this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy-like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I—I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake—and what should I say to her the next time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present—and the odor of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old gray impostor.

Our ancestors were nice<sup>1</sup> in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipped to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intensifying and dulcifying<sup>2</sup> a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet.<sup>3</sup> Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto—

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavor of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the

palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue<sup>5</sup> your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots,<sup>6</sup> stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are—but consider, he is a weakling—a flower.

## THE SUPERANNUATED MAN<sup>7</sup>

*Sera tamen respexit  
Libertas.*<sup>8</sup> VIRGIL.

A clerk I was in London gay.  
O'KEEFE.<sup>9</sup>

IF PERADVENTURE, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six and thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant playtime, and the frequently intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly content, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days

<sup>5</sup>To roast whole.

<sup>6</sup>Small onions.

<sup>7</sup>Lamb disguises his real employment, but in other respects this essay is substantially a record of fact.

<sup>8</sup>Liberty, though late, nevertheless visited me (from the first *Edogwe*, l. 27).

<sup>9</sup>John O'Keeffe (1747–1833), a writer of farces and comic operas. The song has also been attributed to George Colman.

<sup>1</sup>Discriminating. <sup>2</sup>Making tender and sweet.

<sup>3</sup>*Cf. King John*, IV, ii, 10–12.

<sup>4</sup>A Jesuit college for English youths, in France. Lamb, of course, was never there.

of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a weekday saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over—No busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and lively expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day looked anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire.<sup>1</sup> This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thralldom.

Independently of the rigors of attendance,

I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L—, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained laboring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlor. I thought, now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L—, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when to my utter astonishment B—, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant<sup>2</sup> on the expediency of

<sup>1</sup>An exaggeration, as Lamb was born and brought up in London, though his mother and grandmother were natives of Hertfordshire.

<sup>2</sup>To discourse at large.



retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!) and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary<sup>1</sup>—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever.<sup>15</sup> This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boltero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.<sup>2</sup>

*Esto perpetua!*<sup>3</sup>

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the Old Bastile, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my possessions; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forgo their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time

hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candle-light Time, I used to weary out my head and eye-sight in by-gone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me. I am like the man

—That's born, and has his years come to him,  
In some green desert.<sup>4</sup>

"Years," you will say; "what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us he is past fifty."

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years,<sup>20</sup> but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty.<sup>25</sup> 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been so closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy<sup>5</sup> by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:—

—'Twas but just now he went away;  
I have not since had time to shed a tear;  
And yet the distance does the same appear  
As if he had been a thousand years from me,  
Time takes no measure in Eternity.

<sup>1</sup>Lamb's salary was £730 the year. He was granted a pension of £450.

<sup>2</sup>Fictitious names, of course, standing for the directors of the East India Company.

<sup>3</sup>May it be eternal.

<sup>4</sup>Middleton, *Mayor of Queenborough*, I, i, 102-3.

<sup>5</sup>*The Vestal Virgin, or the Roman Ladies*. Howard was Dryden's brother-in-law and lived 1626-1698.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D—I take me if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not,—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six and thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——,<sup>1</sup> officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington<sup>2</sup> of old, stately House of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one half the year supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my “works!”<sup>3</sup> There let them rest, as I do from my labors, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not

reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian,<sup>4</sup> from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six and thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles.<sup>5</sup> It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days; in its distance from, or propinquity to the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, *etc.* The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sat as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed the Ethiop white?—What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging

<sup>1</sup>These are thought to be John Chambers, Henry Dodwell, and W. D. Plumely.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Thomas Gresham and Sir Richard Wittington.

<sup>3</sup>*I. e.*, the ledgers which Lamb had filled with accounts. The 1570 edition of the works of St. Thomas Aquinas filled 17 folio volumes.

<sup>4</sup>*I. e.*, a monk.

<sup>5</sup>They were brought to the British Museum in 1816.

the huge cantle<sup>1</sup> which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure<sup>2</sup> to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.<sup>3</sup>

I am no longer ———, clerk to the firm of, *etc.* I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate*<sup>4</sup> air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.*<sup>5</sup> I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked taskwork, and have the rest of the day to myself.

## POPULAR FALLACIES

### XIV

#### THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK

AT WHAT precise minute that little airy musician doffs his night gear, and prepares

to tune up his unseasonable matins, we are not naturalists enough to determine. But for a mere human gentleman—that has no orchestra business to call him from his warm bed to such preposterous exercises—we take ten, or half after ten (eleven, of course, during this Christmas solstice<sup>6</sup>), to be the very earliest hour, at which he can begin to think of abandoning his pillow. To think of it, we say; for to do it in earnest requires another half-hour's good consideration. Not but there are pretty sun-risings, as we are told, and such like gawds,<sup>7</sup> abroad in the world, in summer time especially, some hours before what we have assigned; which a gentleman may see, as they say, only for getting up. But, having been tempted once or twice, in earlier life, to assist at those ceremonies, we confess our curiosity abated. We are no longer ambitious of being the sun's courtiers, to attend at his morning levees.<sup>8</sup> We hold the good hours of the dawn too sacred to waste them upon such observances; which have in them, besides, something Pagan and Persic.<sup>9</sup> To say truth, we never anticipated our usual hour, or got up with the sun (as 'tis called), to go a journey, or upon a foolish whole day's pleasuring, but we suffered for it all the long hours after in listlessness and headaches; Nature herself sufficiently declaring her sense of our presumption in aspiring to regulate our frail waking courses by the measures of that celestial and sleepless traveler. We deny not that there is something sprightly and vigorous, at the outset especially, in these break-of-day-excursions. It is flattering to get the start of a lazy world; to conquer death by proxy in his image. But the seeds of sleep and mortality are in us; and we pay usually in strange qualms, before night falls, the penalty of the unnatural inversion. Therefore, while the busy part of mankind are fast huddling on their clothes, are already up and about their occupations, content to have swallowed their sleep by wholesale; we choose to linger a-bed, and digest our dreams. It is the very time to recombine the wandering images, which night in a confused mass presented; to snatch them from forgetfulness; to shape, and mold them.

<sup>1</sup>Slice.

<sup>2</sup>The allusion is to a famous passage at the beginning of Bk. II of Lucretius's *On the Nature of Things*. There is a paraphrase of the passage in Bacon's essay *Of Truth*.

<sup>3</sup>*Hamlet*, II, ii, 519.

<sup>4</sup>The allusion is to the phrase *otium cum dignitate*, ease with dignity.

<sup>5</sup>The work has been completed.

<sup>6</sup>Time when the sun is farthest north of the equator and seems to stand still in its course.

<sup>7</sup>Trifles.

<sup>8</sup>Receptions.

<sup>9</sup>Persian. The Persians formerly worshipped the sun.



Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a forgone vision; to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again, with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies; to drag into day-light a struggling and half-vanishing nightmare; to handle and examine the terrors, or the airy solaces. We have too much respect for these spiritual communications to let them go so lightly. We are not so stupid, or so careless, as that Imperial forgetter of his dreams,<sup>1</sup> that we should need a seer to remind us of the form of them. They seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns; or rather to import us more nearly, as more nearly we approach by years to the shadowy world, whither we are hastening. We have shaken hands with the world's business; we have done with it; we have discharged ourself of it. Why should we get up? we have neither suit to solicit, nor affairs to manage. The drama has shut in upon us at the fourth act. We have nothing here to expect, but in a short time a sick-bed, and a dismissal. We delight to anticipate death by such shadows as night affords. We are already half acquainted with ghosts. We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions. Our spirits showed gray before our hairs. The mighty changes of the world already appear as but the vain stuff out of which dramas are composed. We have asked no more of life than what the mimic images in play-houses present us with. Even those types have waxed fainter. Our clock appears to have struck. We are SUPERANNUATED. In this dearth of mundane satisfaction, we contract politic alliances with shadows. It is good to have friends at court. The abstracted media of dreams seem no ill introduction to that spiritual presence, upon which, in no long time, we expect to be thrown. We are trying to know a little of the usages of that colony; to learn the language, and the faces we shall meet with there, that we may be the less awkward at our first coming among them. We willingly call a phantom our fellow, as knowing we shall soon be of their

dark companionship. Therefore, we cherish dreams. We try to spell in them the alphabet of the invisible world; and think we know already, how it shall be with us. Those uncouth shapes, which, while we clung to flesh and blood, affrighted us, have become familiar. We feel attenuated into their meager essences, and have given the hand of half-way approach to incorporeal being. We once thought life to be something; but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. Therefore we choose to dally with visions. The sun has no purposes of ours to light us to. Why should we get up?

## XV

\*THAT WE SHOULD LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB

WE COULD never quite understand the philosophy of this arrangement, or the wisdom of our ancestors in sending us for instruction to these woolly bedfellows. A sheep, when it is dark, has nothing to do but to shut his silly eyes, and sleep if he can. Man found out long sixes.<sup>2</sup>—Hail candle-light! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindest luminary of the three—if we may not rather style thee their radiant deputy, mild viceroy of the moon!—We love to read, talk, sit silent, eat, drink, sleep, by candle-light. They are everybody's sun and moon. This is our peculiar and household planet. Wanting it, what savage unsocial nights must our ancestors have spent, wintering in caves and unilluminated fastnesses! They must have lain about and grumbled at one another in the dark. What repartees could have passed, when you must have felt about for a smile, and handled a neighbor's cheek to be sure that he understood it? This accounts for the seriousness of the elder poetry. It has a somber cast (try Hesiod or Ossian), derived from the tradition of those unlanterned nights. Jokes came in with candles. We wonder how they saw to pick up a pin, if they had any. How did they sup? what a melange<sup>3</sup> of chance carving they must have made of it!—here one had got the leg of a goat, when he wanted a horse's shoulder—there another had dipped his

<sup>2</sup>Candles about eight inches in length, weighing six to the pound.

<sup>3</sup>Mixture.

<sup>1</sup>Nebuchadnezzar. See Daniel, ii.

scooped palm in a kid-skin of wild honey, when he meditated right<sup>1</sup> mare's milk. There is neither good eating nor drinking in fresco.<sup>2</sup> Who, even in these civilized times, has never experienced this, when at some economic table he has commenced dining after dusk, and waited for the flavor till the lights came? The senses absolutely give and take reciprocally. Can you tell pork from veal in the dark? or distinguish Sherris from pure Malaga?<sup>3</sup> Take away the candle from the smoking man; by the glimmering of the left ashes, he knows that he is still smoking, but he knows it only by an inference; till the restored light, coming in aid of the ol-  
 factories, reveals to both senses the full aroma. Then how he redoubles his puffs! how he burnishes!—There is absolutely no such thing as reading, but by a candle. We have tried the affectation of a book at noon-  
 day in gardens, and in sultry arbors; but it was labor thrown away. Those gay motes in the beam come about you, hovering and teasing, like many coquettes, that will have you all to their self, and are jealous of your  
 abstractions. By the midnight taper, the writer digests his meditations. By the same light, we must approach to their perusal, if we would catch the flame, the odor. It is a mockery, all that is reported of the  
 influential Phœbus. No true poem ever

owed its birth to the sun's light. They are abstracted works—

Things that were born, when none but the still  
 night,

5 And his dumb candle, saw his pinching throes.<sup>4</sup>

Marry, daylight—daylight might furnish the images, the crude material; but for the fine shapings, the true turning and filing (as mine author<sup>5</sup> hath it), they must be content to hold their inspiration of the candle. The mild internal light, that reveals them, like fires on the domestic hearth, goes out in the sunshine. Night and silence call out the starry fancies. Milton's Morning Hymn in Paradise,<sup>6</sup> we would hold a good wager was penned at midnight, and Taylor's<sup>7</sup> rich description of a sunrise smells decidedly of the taper. Even ourselves, in these our humbler lucubrations, tune our best measured cadences (Prose has her cadences) not unfrequently to the charm of the drowsier watchman, "blessing the doors"; or the wild sweeps of wind at midnight. Even now a loftier speculation than we have yet attempted, courts our endeavors. We would indite something about the Solar System.—  
*Betty, bring the candles.*

<sup>4</sup>Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*, "Apologetical Dialogue," 190–200.

<sup>5</sup>Ben Jonson, *To the Memory of my Beloved Master William Shakespeare*, 65–68.

<sup>6</sup>*Paradise Lost*, V, 153, and following lines.

<sup>7</sup>Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667), *Holy Dying*, Ch. I, S. iii, § 2.

<sup>1</sup>Real.

<sup>2</sup>Darkness.

<sup>3</sup>Wines.

## WILLIAM COBBETT (1763-1835)

"With respect to my ancestors," Cobbett wrote, "I shall go no farther back than my grandfather, and for this plain reason, that I never heard talk of any prior to him." This grandfather was a rural day-laborer. Cobbett's father was a small farmer, and also kept an inn. Cobbett was the third of his four children (all sons), and was born at Farnham, Surrey, on 9 March, 1763. Of his schooling he said: "I have some faint recollection of going to school to an old woman, who, I believe, did not succeed in learning me my letters. In the winter evenings my father learnt us all to read and write, and gave us a pretty tolerable knowledge of arithmetic. Grammar he did not perfectly understand himself, and therefore his endeavors to learn us that necessarily failed." For the rest, Cobbett was a self-educated man. One episode of his youth is so characteristic that he must be allowed to tell of it himself: "At eleven years of age," he says (though he was more probably fourteen), "my employment was clipping of box-edgings and weeding beds of flowers in the garden of the Bishop of Winchester, at the Castle of Farnham. . . . I had always been fond of beautiful gardens; and a gardener, who had just come from the king's gardens at Kew, gave such a description of them as made me instantly resolve to work in these gardens. The next morning, without saying a word to anyone, off I set, with no clothes except those upon my back, and with thirteen halfpence in my pocket. . . . A long day . . . brought me to Richmond in the afternoon. Two pennyworth of bread and cheese and a pennyworth of small beer, which I had on the road, and one halfpenny that I had lost somehow or other, left threepence in my pocket. With this for my whole fortune, I was trudging through Richmond, in my blue smock-frock and my red garters tied under my knees, when, staring about me, my eye fell upon a little book in a bookseller's window, on the outside of which was written: '*Tale of a Tub*; Price 3d.' The title was so odd that my curiosity was excited. I had the threepence, but, then, I could have no supper. In I went, and got the little book, which I was so impatient to read that I got over into a field, at the upper corner of Kew Gardens, where there stood a hay-stack. On the shady side of this, I sat down to read. The book was so different from anything that I had ever read before; it was something so new to my mind, that, though I could not at all understand some of it, it delighted me beyond description; and it produced what I

have always considered a sort of birth of intellect." There were no consequences of this birth immediately apparent. Cobbett proceeded to get the employment he sought, then was at home again for some years, was saved against his will from becoming a sailor—"from the most toilsome and perilous profession in the world," as he afterward said;—then again on a sudden impulse he ran from home, and became a copying-clerk in a London attorney's office. But after some months the confinement grew intolerable, and he enlisted in a line-regiment which was in service in Nova Scotia. He was now twenty-one, and he remained with his regiment until its return to England in 1791, when he obtained an honorable discharge.

During this period he developed remarkably, and the birth of intellect was unmistakable; nor can it be doubted that Swift had much to do with it, though Cobbett was to become a powerful controversialist, not a satirist, and though the only trait of style he was to have in common with Swift was an extraordinary ability to use simple and plain English with telling effect. He did not at once, however, discover his talent. He first used his freedom to attempt to bring to account certain officers of his regiment whom he charged with peculation. The effort was fruitless, and merely endangered his own safety. With eminent good sense he abandoned it, married Ann Reid (to whom he had become engaged in Nova Scotia) in February, 1792, and fled to France, where he studied the language, until his emigration to Philadelphia, in October, 1792. He was soon drawn into American politics, wrote a controversial pamphlet which had a phenomenal success and was even reprinted by anti-jacobins in England, and thus discovered his true sphere of activity. He took the federal side in the United States, and conducted a party-paper, *Porcupine's Gazette*, from March, 1797, until the end of 1799. In 1800 he returned to England, where he was heartily welcomed by members of the Government party, including Pitt himself, then Prime Minister. Conditions were uncertain, and Cobbett's controversial force and ability promised to be invaluable. He refused, however, to take orders or to sacrifice his independence, and he soon found himself drawn by his sense of justice into opposition. The change was gradual, perhaps never wholly complete, but he became wholeheartedly the *people's friend*—a "radical agitator," in other words—and devoted all his immense energy to spreading the gospel of liberal reform



through the remainder of his days. He also maintained throughout his life a warm interest in the improvement of agriculture, conducted experiments, and circulated his ideas on the subject as energetically as he spread abroad his political convictions. He plunged into much trouble, of course, and invited retaliation, with success. His attacks on military flogging in 1810 were made the excuse for a prosecution which resulted in a conviction, two years' imprisonment, and a fine of £1000, which ruined him financially, but did not discourage or silence him. A threat of further imprisonment in 1817 caused him to flee to America, where he remained more than two years. At the close of 1832 he finally obtained a seat in Parliament, where, however, he was not able to accomplish much. He died suddenly—still full of energy and busily making plans for future work until within a week of his death—on 18 June, 1835.

His "authoring transactions," as he once called them, had been almost endless. Much that he

wrote, concerned with the details of his political conflicts, has now, perforce, lost in interest;—though even his enemies have always admitted that "he could never be dull for long together," and there is scarcely anything from his pen which is not enlivened with passages of great power and true beauty, calculated to delight those who are at all interested in the expressive possibilities of the English language. His *Rural Rides*, however, and his *Advice to Young Men* combine some of his best writing with a subject-matter of permanent interest, and these books are his best title to a place amongst the great masters of English prose—a place which has long been withheld from him, but which he deserves, and is now attaining. Mr. G. K. Chesterton's contention that he has a larger claim upon posterity than Carlyle (*Transactions R. S. L.*, New Series, III) is scarcely disputable, has already received strong support from the work of Mr. G. D. H. Cole, and is altogether likely to find general acceptance during the next quarter-century.

## RURAL RIDES<sup>1</sup>

### I. OXFORD

BURGHCLERE (HANTS),  
SUNDAY, 18 NOVEMBER, 1821.

WE LEFT Oxford early, and went on, through Abingdon (Berks) to Market-Isley. It is a saying, hereabouts, that, at Oxford, they make the living pay for the dead, which is precisely according to the Pitt-System.<sup>2</sup> Having smarted on this account, we were afraid to eat again at an inn; so we pushed on through Isley towards Newbury, breakfasting upon the residue of the nuts, aided by a new supply of apples bought from a poor man, who exhibited them in his window. Inspired, like Don Quixote, by the sight of the nuts, and recollecting the last night's bill, I exclaimed: "Happy! thrice happy and blessed, that golden age, when men lived on the simple fruits of the earth and slaked their thirst at the

pure and limpid brook! when the trees shed their leaves to form a couch for their repose, and cast their bark to furnish them with a canopy! Happy age; when no Oxford landlord charged two men, who had dropped into a common coach-passenger room, and who had swallowed three pennyworths of food, 'four shillings for teas,' and 'eighteen pence for cold meat,' 'two shillings for molds<sup>3</sup> and fire' in this common coach-room, and 'five shillings for beds!' " This was a sort of grace before meat to the nuts and apples; and it had much more merit than the harangue of Don Quixote; for he, before he began upon the nuts, had stuffed himself with the goat's flesh and wine, whereas we had absolutely fled from the breakfast-table and blazing fire at Oxford.—Upon beholding the masses of buildings, at Oxford, devoted to what they call "learning," I could not help reflecting on the drones that they contain and the wasps they send forth! However, malignant as some are, the great and prevalent characteristic is *folly*: emptiness of head; want of talent; and one half of the fellows who are what they call *educated* here, are unfit to be clerks in a grocer's or mercer's shop.—As I looked up at what they call University Hall, I could not help reflecting that what I had written, even since I left Kensington on the 29th of October, would produce more effect, and do more good in the

<sup>1</sup>From 1821 onward Cobbett spent much time riding through the English countryside, whenever freedom from business and politics permitted, observing agricultural and social conditions, making political addresses to farmers and laborers, and recording his impressions and experiences in a journal, which he printed from week to week in his *Political Register*. He collected these journals and reports of his speeches—"Rustic Harangues," he called them—in a book entitled *Rural Rides* in 1830. In a later edition there was added the journal of a northern ride which Cobbett took in the autumn of 1832.

<sup>2</sup>*I. e.*, the system of funding the public debt, spreading out payment over many years, and permitting creditors to collect interest in the mean time. This and paper money, Cobbett was convinced, were ruining England.

<sup>3</sup>Candles (made in molds).

world, than all that had, for a hundred years, been written by all the members of this University,<sup>1</sup> who devour, perhaps, not less than a *million pounds a year*, arising from property, completely at the disposal of the "Great Council of the Nation"; and I could not help exclaiming to myself: "Stand forth, ye big-wigged, ye gloriously feeding Doctors! Stand forth, ye *rich* of that church whose *poor* have had given them a *hundred thousand pounds a year*, not out of your riches, but out of the *taxes*, raised, in part, from the *salt* of the laboring man! Stand forth and face me, who have, from the pen of my leisure hours, sent, amongst your flocks, a hundred thousand sermons in ten months! More than you have all done for the last half century!" I exclaimed in vain. I dare say (for it was at peep of day) that not a man of them had yet endeavored to unclothe his eyes.—In coming through Abingdon (Berks) I could not help thinking of that great financier, Mr. John Maberly, by whom this place has, I believe, the honor to be represented in the Collective Wisdom of the Nation.<sup>2</sup>—In the way to Ilsley we came across a part of that fine tract of land, called the Vale of Berkshire, where they grow *wheat* and *beans*, one after another, for many years together. About three miles before we reached Ilsley we came to *downs*, with, as is always the case, chalk under. Between Ilsley and Newbury the country is enclosed; the land middling, a stony loam; the woods and coppices frequent, and neither very good till we came within a short distance of Newbury. In going along we saw a piece of wheat with cabbage-leaves laid all over it at the distance, perhaps, of eight or ten feet from each other. It was to catch the *slugs*. The slugs, which commit their depredations in the *night*, creep under the leaves in the morning, and by turning up the leaves you come at the slugs, and crush them, or carry them away. But besides the immense daily labor attending this, the slug, in a field sowed with wheat, has a *clod* to creep under at every

foot, and will not go five feet to get under a cabbage-leaf. Then again, if the day be *wet*, the slug works by day as well as by night. It is the sun and drought that he shuns, and not the light. Therefore the only effectual way to destroy slugs, is to sow lime, in dust, and *not slaked*. The slug is wet, he has hardly any skin, his *slime* is his covering; the smallest dust of hot lime kills him; and a few bushels to the acre are sufficient. You must sow the lime at *dusk*; for then the slugs are sure to be out. Slugs come after a crop that has long afforded a great deal of shelter from the sun; such as peas and vetches. In gardens they are nursed up by strawberry beds, and by weeds; by asparagus beds; or by anything that remains for a long time to keep the summer-sun from the earth. We got about three o'clock to this nice, snug little farm-house, and found our host, Mr. Budd, at home.

## II. A NOBLE PLANTATION— DR. JOHNSON

KENSINGTON,

FRIDAY, 23 NOVEMBER, 1821.

GOT home by the coach. At leaving Whitechurch we soon passed the mill where the Mother-Bank paper is made! Thank God, this mill is likely soon to want employment! Hard by is a pretty park and house, belonging to "Squire" Portal, the *paper-maker*. The country people, who seldom want for sarcastic shrewdness, call it "*Rag Hall*"!—I perceive that they are planting oaks on the "*wastes*," as the *Agriculturasses* call them, about Hartley Row; which is very good; because the herbage, after the first year, is rather increased than diminished by the operation; while, in time, the oaks arrive at a timber state, and add to the beauty and to the *real wealth* of the country, and to the real and solid wealth of the descendants of the planter, who, in every such case, merits unequivocal praise, because he plants for his children's children. The planter here is Lady Mildmay, who is, it seems, Lady of the Manors about here. It is impossible to praise this act of hers too much, especially when one considers her *age*. I beg a thousand pardons! I do not mean to say that her ladyship is *old*; but she has long had grandchildren. If her ladyship had been a reader of old dread-death and dread-devil Johnson, that teacher of

<sup>1</sup>As will be seen also from other passages printed here. Cobbett was not a shrinking violet, and never hesitated to call attention to the value of his own work. He was in fact an egotist on a large scale. But it should be remembered that, on the whole, he simply expressed his opinion of his own work as honestly and openly as he expressed his opinion of everything else; and, in addition, that one condition of his political effectiveness was the preservation of the general impression that he was enormously powerful in forwarding his causes.

<sup>2</sup>Cobbett's ironical phrase for Parliament.

moping and melancholy, she never would have planted an oak tree. If the writings of this time-serving, mean, dastardly old pensioner had got a firm hold of the minds of the people at large, the people would have been bereft of their very souls. These writings, aided by the charm of pompous sound, were fast making their way, till light, reason, and the French Revolution came to drive them into oblivion; or, at least, to confine them to the shelves of repentant, married old rakes, and those of old stock-jobbers with young wives standing in need of something to keep down the unruly ebullitions which are apt to take place while the "dearies" are gone hobbling to 'Change.—"After *pleasure* comes *pain*," says Solomon; and after the sight of Lady Mildmay's truly noble plantations, came that of the clouts of the "gentlemen cadets" of the "*Royal Military College of Sandhurst*"! Here, close by the road side, is the *drying-ground*. Sheets, shirts, and all sorts of things were here spread upon lines, covering, perhaps, an acre of ground! We soon afterwards came to *York Place on Osna- burg Hill*. And is there never to be an end of these things? Away to the left, we see that immense building, which contains children *breeding up to be military commanders!* Has this plan cost so little as two millions of pounds? I never see this place (and I have seen it forty times during the last twenty years) without asking myself this question: Will this thing be suffered to go on; will this thing, created by money *raised by loan*; will this thing be upheld by means of taxes, *while the interest of the debt is reduced*, on the ground that the nation is *unable to pay the interest in full?*—Answer that question, Castlereagh, Sidmouth, Brougham, or Scarlett.

### III. HAWKLEY HANGER

THURSLEY,

24 NOVEMBER, 1822.

FROM East-Meon, I did not go on to Froxfield church, but turned off to the left to a place (a couple of houses) called Bower. Near this I stopped at a friend's house, which is in about as lonely a situation as I ever saw. A very pleasant place however. The lands dry, a nice mixture of woods and fields, and a great variety of hill and dell.

Before I came to East-Meon, the soil of

the hills was a shallow loam with flints, on a bottom of chalk; but, on this side of the valley of East-Meon; that is to say, on the north side, the soil on the hills is a deep, stiff loam, on a bed of a sort of gravel mixed with chalk; and the stones, instead of being gray on the outside and blue on the inside, are yellow on the outside and whitish on the inside. In coming on further to the north, I found that the bottom was sometimes gravel and sometimes chalk. Here, at the time when *whatever it was* that formed these hills and valleys, the stuff of which Hindhead is composed seems to have run down and mixed itself with the stuff of which Old Winchester Hill is composed. Free chalk (which is the sort found here) is excellent manure for stiff land, and it produces a complete change in the nature of *clays*. It is, therefore, dug here, on the north of East-Meon, about in the fields, where it happens to be found, and is laid out upon the surface, where it is crumbled to powder by the frost, and thus gets incorporated with the loam.

At Bower I got instructions to go to Hawkley, but accompanied with most earnest advice not to go that way, for that it was impossible to get along. The roads were represented as so bad; the floods so much out; the hills and bogs so dangerous; that, really, I began to *doubt*; and, if I had not been brought up amongst the clays of the Holt Forest and the bogs of the neighboring heaths, I should certainly have turned off to my right, to go over Hindhead, great as was my objection to going that way. "Well, then," said my friend at Bower, "if you *will* go that way, by God, you must go down Hawkley Hanger"; of which he then gave me *such* a description! But even this I found to fall short of the reality. I inquired simply, whether *people were in the habit* of going down it; and the answer being in the affirmative, on I went through green lanes and bridle-ways till I came to the turnpike-road from Petersfield to Winchester, which I crossed, going into a narrow and almost untrudged green lane, on the side of which I found a cottage. Upon my asking the way to Hawkley, the woman at the cottage said, "Right up the lane, sir: You'll come to a *hanger* presently: you must take care, sir: you can't ride down: will your horses *go alone?*"

On we trotted up this pretty green lane; and



indeed, we had been coming gently and generally uphill for a good while. The lane was between highish banks and pretty high stuff growing on the banks, so that we could see no distance from us, and could receive not the smallest hint of what was so near at hand. The lane had a little turn towards the end; so that, out we came, all in a moment, at the very edge of the hanger! And never, in all my life, was I so surprised and so delighted! I pulled up my horse, and sat and looked; and it was like looking from the top of a castle down into the sea, except that the valley was land and not water. I looked at my servant, to see what effect this unexpected sight had upon him. His surprise was as great as mine, though he had been bred amongst the North Hampshire hills. Those who had so strenuously dwelt on the dirt and dangers of this route, had said not a word about beauties, the matchless beauties of the scenery. These hangers are woods on the sides of very steep hills. The trees and underwood *hang*, in some sort, to the ground, instead of *standing on* it. Hence these places are called *Hangers*. From the summit of that which I had now to descend, I looked down upon the villages of Hawkley, Greatham, Selborne and some others.

From the south-east, round, southward, to the north-west, the main valley has cross-valleys running out of it, the hills on the sides of which are very steep, and, in many parts, covered with wood. The hills that form these cross-valleys run out into the main valley, like piers into the sea. Two of these promontories, of great height, are on the west side of the main valley, and were the first objects that struck my sight when I came to the edge of the hanger, which was on the south. The ends of these promontories are nearly perpendicular, and their tops so high in the air, that you cannot look at the village below without something like a feeling of apprehension. The leaves are all off, the hop-poles are in stack, the fields have little verdure; but, while the spot is beautiful beyond description even now, I must leave to imagination to suppose what it is when the trees and hangers and hedges are in leaf, the corn waving, the meadows bright, and the hops upon the poles!

From the south-west, round, eastward, to the north, lie the *heaths*, of which Woolmer

Forest makes a part, and these go gradually rising up to Hindhead, the crown of which is to the north-west, leaving the rest of the circle (the part from north to north-west) to be occupied by a continuation of the valley towards Headley, Binstead, Frensham and the Holt Forest. So that even the *contrast* in the view from the top of the hanger is as great as can possibly be imagined. Men, however, are not to have such beautiful views as this without some trouble. We had had the view; but we had to go down the hanger. We had, indeed, some roads to get along, as we could, afterwards; but we had to get down the hanger first. The horses took the lead, and crept partly down upon their feet and partly upon their hocks. It was extremely slippery too; for the soil is a sort of marl, or, as they call it here, *maume*, or *mame*, which is, when wet, very much like *gray soap*. In such a case it was likely that I should keep in the rear, which I did, and I descended by taking hold of the branches of the underwood, and so letting myself down. When we got to the bottom, I bade my man, when he should go back to Uphusband, tell the people there that Ashmansworth Lane is not the *worst* piece of road in the world. Our worst, however, was not come yet, nor had we by any means seen the most novel sights.

After crossing a little field and going through a farmyard, we came into a lane, which was, at once, road and river. We found a hard bottom, however; and when we got out of the water, we got into a lane with high banks. The banks were quarries of white stone, like Portland-stone, and the bed of the road was of the same stone; and, the rains having been heavy for a day or two before, the whole was as clean and as white as the steps of a fundholder or dead-weight doorway in one of the squares of the Wen.<sup>1</sup> Here were we, then, going along a stone road with stone banks, and yet the underwood and trees grew well upon the tops of the banks. In the solid stone beneath us, there were a horse-track and wheel-tracks, the former about three and the latter about six inches deep. How many many ages it must have taken the horses' feet, the wheels, and the water, to wear down this stone so as to form a hollow way! The horses seemed alarmed at their situation; they trod

<sup>1</sup>London, so called by Cobbett because he considered it a great excrescence on the country, and hated it.

with fear; but they took us along very nicely, and, at last, got us safe into the indescribable dirt and mire of the road from Hawkley Green to Greatham. Here the bottom of all the land is this solid white stone, and the top is that *mame*, which I have before described. The hop-roots penetrate down into this stone. How deep the stone may go I know not; but, when I came to look up at the end of one of the piers, or promontories, mentioned above, I found that it was all of this same stone.

At Hawkley Green I asked a farmer the way to Thursley. He pointed to one of two roads going from the green; but, it appearing to me that that would lead me up to the London road and over Hindhead, I gave him to understand that I was resolved to get along, somehow or other, through the "low countries." He besought me not to think of it. However, finding me resolved, he got a man to go a little way to put me into the Greatham road. The man came, but the farmer could not let me go off without renewing his entreaties that I would go away to Liphook, in which entreaties the man joined, though he was to be paid very well for his trouble.

Off we went, however, to Greatham. I am thinking whether I ever did see *worse* roads. Upon the whole, I think, I have; though I am not sure that the roads of New Jersey, between Trenton and Elizabeth Town, at the breaking up of winter, be worse. Talk of *shows*, indeed! Take a piece of this road; just a cut across, and a rod long, and carry it up to London. That would be something like a *show*!

Upon leaving Greatham we came out upon Woolmer Forest. Just as we were coming out of Greatham, I asked a man the way to Thursley. "You *must* go to *Liphook*, sir," said he. "But," I said, "I *will not* go to Liphook." These people seemed to be posted at all these stages to turn me aside from my purpose, and to make me go over that Hindhead, which I had resolved to avoid. I went on a little further, and asked another man the way to Headley, which, as I have already observed, lies on the western foot of Hindhead, whence I knew there must be a road to Thursley (which lies at the north-east foot) without going over that miserable hill. The man told me that I must go across the *forest*. I asked him whether it was a *good* road: "It is a *sound* road," said he, laying a

weighty emphasis upon the word *sound*. "Do people *go* it?" said I. "*Ye-es*," said he. "Oh, then," said I, to my man, "as it is a *sound* road, keep you close to my heels, and do not attempt to go aside, not even for a foot." Indeed, it was a *sound* road. The rain of the night had made the fresh horse tracks visible. And we got to Headley in a short time, over a sand-road, which seemed so delightful after the flints and stone and dirt and sloughs that we had passed over and through since the morning! This road was not, if we had been benighted, without its dangers, the forest being full of quags and quicksands. This is a tract of Crown-lands, or, properly speaking, *public-lands*, on some parts of which our land steward, Mr. Huskisson, is making some plantations of trees, partly fir, and partly other trees. What he can plant the *fir* for, God only knows, seeing that the country is already over-stocked with that rubbish. But this *public-land* concern is a very great concern.

If I were a member of Parliament, I *would* know what timber has been cut down, and what it has been sold for, since year 1790. However, this matter must be *investigated*, first or last. It never can be omitted in the winding up of the concern; and that winding up must come out of wheat at four shillings a bushel. It is said, hereabouts, that a man who lives near Liphook, and who is so mighty a hunter and game pursuer that they call him *William Rufus*; it is said that this man is *Lord of the Manor of Woolmer Forest*. This he cannot be without a *grant* to that effect; and, if there be a grant, there must have been a *reason* for the grant. This *reason* I should very much like to know; and this I would know if I were a member of Parliament. That the people call him the *Lord of the Manor* is certain; but he can hardly make preserves of the plantations; for it is well known how marvelously *hares* and *young trees* agree together! This is a matter of great public importance; and yet, how, in the present state of things, is an *investigation* to be obtained? Is there a man in Parliament that will call for it? Not one. Would a dissolution of Parliament mend the matter? No: for the same men would be there still. They are the same men that have been there for these thirty years; and the *same men* they will be, and they *must be*, until there be a *reform*. To be sure

when one dies, or cuts his throat (as in the case of Castlereagh), another *one* comes; but it is the *same body*. And, as long as it is that same body, things will always go on as they now go on. However, as Mr. Canning says the body "*works well*," we must not say the contrary.

The soil of this tract is, generally, a black sand, which, in some places, becomes *peat*, which makes very tolerable fuel. In some parts there is clay at bottom; and there the *oaks* would grow; but not while there are *hares* in any number on the forest. If trees be to grow here, there ought to be no hares, and as little hunting as possible.

We got to Headley, the sign of the Holly Bush, just at dusk, and just as it began to rain. I had neither eaten nor drunk since eight o'clock in the morning; and as it was a nice little public-house, I at first intended to stay all night, an intention that I afterwards very indiscreetly gave up. I had *laid my plan*, which included the getting to Thursley that night. When, therefore, I had got some cold bacon and bread, and some milk, I began to feel ashamed of stopping short of my *plan*, especially after having so heroically persevered in the "*stern path*," and so disdainfully scorned to go over Hindhead. I knew that my road lay through a hamlet called Churt, where they grow such fine *benmet-grass* seed. There was a moon; but there was also a hazy rain. I had heaths to go over, and I might go into quags. Wishing to execute my plan, however, I at last brought myself to quit a very comfortable turf-fire, and to set off in the rain, having bargained to give a man three shillings to guide me out to the northern foot of Hindhead. I took care to ascertain that my guide knew the road perfectly well; that is to say, I took care to ascertain it as far as I could, which was, indeed, no further than his word would go. Off we set, the guide mounted on his own or master's horse, and with a white smock frock, which enabled us to see him clearly. We trotted on pretty fast for about half an hour; and I perceived, not without some surprise, that the rain, which I knew to be coming from the *south*, met me full in the face, when it ought, according to my reckoning, to have beat upon my right cheek. I called to the guide repeatedly to ask him if he was *sure that he was right*, to which he always answered, "Oh! yes, sir, I know the road."

I did not like this, "*I know the road*." At last, after going about six miles in nearly a southern direction, the guide turned short to the left. That brought the rain upon my right cheek, and, though I could not very well account for the long stretch to the south, I thought that, at any rate, we were *now* in the right track; and, after going about a mile in this new direction, I began to ask the guide *how much further we had to go*; for I had got a pretty good soaking, and was rather impatient to see the foot of Hindhead. Just at this time, in raising my head and looking forward as I spoke to the guide, what should I see but a long, high, and steep *hanger* arising before us, the trees along the top of which I could easily distinguish! The fact was, we were just getting to the outside of the heath, and were on the brow of a steep hill, which faced this hanging wood. The guide had begun to descend; and I had called to him to stop; for the hill was so steep that, rain as it did and wet as my saddle must be, I got off my horse in order to walk down. But, now behold, the fellow discovered that he *had lost his way*!—Where we were I could not even guess. There was but one remedy, and that was to get back, if we could. I became guide now; and did as Mr. Western is advising the ministers to do, *re-traced* my steps. We went back about half the way that we had come, when we saw two men, who showed us the way that we ought to go. At the end of about a mile, we fortunately found the turnpike-road; not, indeed, at the *foot*, but on the *tip-top* of that very Hindhead, on which I had so repeatedly *vowed* I would not go! We came out on the turnpike some hundred yards on the Liphook side of the buildings called *the Hut*; so that we had the whole of three miles of hill to come down at not much better than a foot pace, with a good pelting rain at our backs.

It is odd enough how differently one is affected by the same sight, under different circumstances. At the "*Holly Bush*" at Headley there was a room full of fellows in white smock frocks, drinking and smoking and talking, and I, who was then dry and warm, *moralized* within myself on their *folly* in spending their time in such a way. But when I got down from Hindhead to the public-house at Road Lane, with my skin soaking and my teeth chattering, I thought just such another group, whom I saw through the window sit-



ting round a good fire with pipes in their mouths, the *wisest assembly* I had ever set my eyes on. A real *Collective Wisdom*. And I most solemnly declare, that I felt a greater veneration for them than I have ever felt even for the *Privy Council*, notwithstanding the Right Honorable Charles Wynn and the Right Honorable Sir John Sinclair belong to the latter.

It was now but a step to my friend's house, where a good fire and a change of clothes soon put all to rights, save and except the having come over Hindhead after all my resolutions. This mortifying circumstance; this having been *beaten*, lost the guide the *three shillings* that I had agreed to give him. "Either," said I, "you did not know the way well, or you did: if the former, it was dishonest in you to undertake to guide me: if the latter, you have willfully led me miles out of my way." He grumbled; but off he went. He certainly deserved nothing; for he did not know the way, and he prevented some other man from earning and receiving the money. But had he not caused me to *get upon Hind-head*, he would have had the three shillings. I had, at one time, got my hand in my pocket; but the thought of having been *beaten* pulled it out again.

Thus ended the most interesting day, as far as I know, that I ever passed in all my life. Hawkley-hangers, promontories, and stone-roads will always come into my mind when I see, or hear of, picturesque views. I forgot to mention that, in going from Hawkley to Greatham, the man who went to show me the way, told me at a certain fork, "that road goes to Selborne." This put me in mind of a book, which was once recommended to me, but which I never saw, entitled *The History and Antiquities of Selborne* (or something of that sort), written, I think, by a parson of the name of White, brother of Mr. White, so long a bookseller in Fleet Street. This parson had, I think, the living of the parish of Selborne. The book was mentioned to me as a work of great curiosity and interest. But, at that time, the *THING*<sup>1</sup> was biting so *very sharply* that one had no attention to bestow on antiquarian researches. Wheat at 39s. a quarter, and South-Down ewes at 12s. 6d. have so weakened the *THING*'s jaws and so filed down

its teeth, that I shall now certainly read this book if I can get it. By the bye, if *all the parsons* had, for the last thirty years, employed their leisure time in writing the histories of their several parishes, instead of living, as many of them have, engaged in pursuits that I need not here name, neither their situation nor that of their flocks would, perhaps, have been the worse for it at this

#### IV. BEAULIEU ABBEY

WESTON GROVE,

WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER, 1826.

YESTERDAY, from Lyndhurst to this place was a ride, including our round-about, of more than forty miles; but the roads the best in the world, one half of the way green turf; and the day as fine an one as ever came out of the heavens. We took in a breakfast, calculated for a long day's work, and for no more eating till night. We had slept in a room, the access to which was only through another sleeping room, which was also occupied; and as I had got up about *two o'clock* at Andover, we went to bed, at Lyndhurst, about *half-past seven o'clock*. I was, of course, awake by three or four; I had eaten little over night; so that here lay I, not liking (even after daylight began to glimmer) to go through a chamber, where, by possibility, there might be "a lady" actually *in bed*; here lay I, my bones aching with lying in bed, my stomach growling for victuals, imprisoned by my *modesty*. But at last I grew impatient; for, modesty here or modesty there, I was not to be penned up and starved: so after having shaved and dressed and got ready to go down, I thrust George out a little before me into the other room; and through we pushed, previously resolving, of course, not to look towards *the bed* that was there. But as the devil would have it, just as I was about the middle of the room, I, like Lot's wife, turned my head! All that I shall say is, first, that the consequences that befell her did not befall me, and, second, that I advise those who are likely to be hungry in the morning not to sleep in *inner rooms*; or, if they do, to take some bread and cheese in their pockets. Having got safe down stairs, I lost no time in inquiry after the means of obtaining a breakfast to make up for the bad fare of the previous day; and finding my landlady rather tardy in the work,

<sup>1</sup>Cobbett's name for the general system of English government and public finance for whose reform he was fighting.

and not, seemingly, having a proper notion of the affair, I went myself, and having found a butcher's shop, bought a loin of small, fat, wether mutton, which I saw cut out of the sheep and cut into chops. These were brought to the inn; George and I ate about 2lb. out of the 5lb. and while I was writing a letter, and making up my packet, to be ready to send from Southampton, George went out and found a poor woman to come and take away the rest of the loin of mutton; for our *fastings* of the day before enabled us to do this; and though we had about forty miles to go to get to this place (through the route that we intended to take), I had resolved that we would go without any more *purchase* of victuals and drink this day also. I beg leave to suggest to my *well-fed* readers; I mean, those who have at their command more victuals and drink than they can possibly swallow; I beg to suggest to such, whether this would not be a good way for them all to find the means of bestowing charity? Some poet has said, that that which is given in *charity* gives a blessing on both sides; to the giver as well as the receiver. But I really think that if in *general* the food and drink given came out of food and drink *deducted* from the usual quantity swallowed by the giver, the *blessing* would be still greater, and much more certain. I can speak for myself, at any rate. I hardly ever eat more than *twice* a day; when at home, never; and I never, if I can well avoid it, eat any meat later than about one or two o'clock in the day. I drink a little tea or milk and water at the usual tea-time (about 7 o'clock); I go to bed at eight, if I can; I write or read from about four to about eight, and then hungry as a hunter I go to breakfast, eating as *small a parcel* of cold meat and bread as I can prevail upon my teeth to be satisfied with. I do just the same at dinner time. I very rarely taste *garden-stuff* of any sort. If any man can show me that he has done, or can do, *more work*, bodily and mentally united; I say nothing about good health, for of that the public can know nothing; but I refer to the *work*: the public know, they see what I can do, and what I actually have done, and what I do; and when anyone has shown the public that he has done, or can do, more, then I will advise my readers attend to him on the subject of diet and not to me. As to *drink*, the less the better; and mine is milk

and water, or *not-sour* small beer, if I can get the latter; for the former I always can. I like the milk and water best; but I do not like much water; if I drink much milk it loads and stupefies and makes me fat.

Having made all preparations for a day's ride, we set off, as our first point, for a station in the Forest called New Park, there to see something about *plantations* and other matters connected with the affairs of our prime cocks, the surveyors of woods and forests and crown lands and estates. But before I go forward any further, I must just step back again to Rumsey, which we passed rather too hastily through on the 16th, as noticed in the Ride that was published last week. This town was, in ancient times, a very grand place, though it is now nothing more than a decent market-town, without anything to entitle it to particular notice, except its church, which was the church of an abbey nunnery (founded more, I think, than a thousand years ago), and which church was the burial place of several of the Saxon kings, and of "Lady Palmerstone," who a few years ago "died in child-birth!" What a mixture! But there was another personage buried here, and who was, it would seem, a native of the place; namely, Sir William Petty, the ancestor of the present Marquis of Lansdown. He was the son of a *cloth-weaver*, and was, doubtless, himself a weaver when young. He became a surgeon, was first in the service of Charles I, then went into that of Cromwell, whom he served as physician-general to his army in Ireland (alas! poor Ireland), and in this capacity he resided at Dublin till Charles II came, when he came over to London (having become very rich), was knighted by that profligate and ungrateful king, and he died in 1687 leaving a fortune of £15,000 a year! This is what his biographers say. He must have made pretty good use of his time while physician-general to Cromwell's army in poor Ireland! Petty by nature as well as by name, he got from Cromwell a "patent for *double-writing*, invented by him"; and he invented a "*double-bottomed ship to sail against wind and tide*, a model of which is still preserved in the library of the Royal Society," of which he was a most worthy member. His great art was, however, the amassing of money, and the getting of *grants of lands in poor Ireland*, in which he was one of the most successful of the Eng-

lish adventurers. I had, the other day, occasion to observe that the word *Petty* manifestly is the French word *Petit*, which means little; and that it is, in these days of degeneracy, pleasing to reflect that there is *one family*, at any rate, that "Old England" still boasts one family, which retains the character designated by its pristine name; a reflection that rushed with great force into my mind when, in the year 1822, I heard the present noble head of the family say, in the House of Lords, that he thought that a currency of paper, convertible into gold, was the best and most solid and safe, especially since *Platina*<sup>1</sup> had been discovered! "Oh, God!" exclaimed I to myself, as I stood listening and admiring "below the bar"; "Oh, great God! there it is, there it is, still running in the blood, that genius which discovered the art of double writing, and of making ships with double-bottoms to sail against wind and tide!" This noble and profound descendant of Cromwell's army-physician has now seen that "paper, convertible into gold," is not quite so "solid and safe" as he thought it was! He has now seen what a "late panic" is! And he might, if he were not so very well worthy of his family name, openly confess that he was deceived when, in 1819, he as one of the committee who reported in favor of Peel's bill said that the country could pay the interest of the debt in gold! Talk of a *change of ministry*, indeed! What is to be *gained* by putting this man in the place of any of those who are in power now?

To come back now to Lyndhurst, we had to go about three miles to New Park, which is a *farm* in the New Forest, and nearly in the center of it. We got to this place about nine o'clock. There is a good and large mansion-house here, in which the "commissioners" of woods and forests reside when they come into the forest. There is a garden, a farm-yard, a farm, and a nursery. The place looks like a considerable gentleman's seat; the house stands in a sort of *park*, and you can see that a great deal of expense has been incurred in leveling the ground and making it pleasing to the eye of my lords "the commissioners." My business here was to see whether anything had been done towards the making of *locust plantations*. I went first to Lyndhurst to make inquiries; but I was there told that New

Park was the place, and the only place, at which to get information on the subject; and I was told, further, that the commissioners were now at New Park; that is to say those experienced tree-planters, Messrs. Arbuthnot, Dawkins, and Company. Gad! thought I, I am here coming in close contact with a branch, or at least a twig, of the great THING itself! When I heard this, I was at breakfast, and of course dressed for the day. I could not, out of my extremely limited wardrobe, afford a clean shirt for the occasion; and so off we set, just as we were, hoping that their worships, the nation's tree-planters, would, if they met with us, excuse our dress, when they considered the nature of our circumstances. When we came to the house, we were stopped by a little fence and fastened gate. I got off my horse, gave him to George to hold, went up to the door, and rang the bell. Having told my business to a person, who appeared to be a foreman or bailiff, he, with great civility, took me into a nursery which is at the back of the house; and I soon drew from him the disappointing fact that my lords, the tree-planters, had departed the day before! I found, as to *locusts*, that a patch were sowed last spring, which I saw, which are from one foot to four feet high, and very fine and strong, and are, in number, about enough to plant two acres of ground, the plants at four feet apart each way. I found that last fall some few locusts had been put out into plantations of other trees already made; but that they had *not thriven*, and had been *barked* by the hares! But a little bunch of these trees (same age), which were planted in the nursery, ought to convince my lords, the tree-planters, that if they were to do what they ought to do the public would very soon be owners of fine plantations of locusts for the use of the navy. And what are the *hares* kept for here? *Who* eats them? What *right* have these commissioners to keep hares here to eat up the trees? Lord Folkestone killed his hares before he made his plantation of locusts; and why not kill the hares in the *people's* forest; for the *people's* it is, and that these commissioners ought always to remember. And then again, why this farm? What is it *for*? Why, the pretense for it is this: that it is necessary to give the deer *hay*, in winter, because the lopping down of limbs of trees for them to *browse*

<sup>1</sup>Platinum.



(as used to be the practice) is injurious to the growth of timber. That will be a very good reason for having a *hay-farm* when my lords shall have proved two things; first, that hay, in quantity equal to what is raised here, could not be bought for a twentieth part of the money that this farm and all its trappings cost; and, second, that there ought to be any deer kept! What are these deer *for*? Who are to *eat* them? Are they for the royal family? Why, there are more deer bred in Richmond Park alone to say nothing of Bushy Park, Hyde Park, and Windsor Park; there are more deer bred in Richmond Park alone than would feed all the branches of the royal family and all their households all the year round, if every soul of them ate as hearty as plowmen, and if they never touched a morsel of any kind of meat but venison! For what, and *for whom*, then, are deer kept in the New Forest; and why an expense of hay-farm, of sheds, of racks, of keepers, of lodges, and other things attending the deer and the game; an expense amounting to more money annually than would have given relief to all the starving manufacturers in the north! And, again I say, *who* is all this venison and game *for*? There is more game even in Kew Gardens than the royal family can want! And, in short, do they ever taste, or even hear of, any game, or any venison, from the New Forest?

What a pretty thing here is, then! Here is another deep bite into us by the long and sharp-fanged aristocracy, who so love Old Sarum! Is there a man who will say that this is right? And that the game should be kept, too, to eat up trees, to destroy plantations, to destroy what is first paid for the planting of! And that the public should pay keepers to preserve this game! And that the *people* should be *transported* if they go out by night to catch the game that they pay for feeding! Blessed state of an aristocracy! It is pity that it has got a nasty, ugly, obstinate DEBT to deal with! It might possibly go on for ages, deer and all, were it not for this DEBT. This New Forest is a piece of property as much belonging to the *public* as the Custom House at London is. There is no man, however poor, who has not a right in it. Every man is owner of a part of the deer, the game, and of the money that goes to the keepers; and yet any man may be *transported* if he go out by

night to catch any part of this game! We are compelled to pay keepers for preserving game to eat up the trees that we are compelled to pay people to plant! Still, however, there is comfort; we *might* be worse off; for the Turks made the Tartars pay a tax called *tooth-money*; that is to say, they eat up the victuals of the Tartars, and then made them pay for the *use of their teeth*. No man can say that we are come quite to that yet: and, besides, the poor Tartars had no DEBT, no blessed debt to hold out hope to them.

The same person (a very civil and intelligent man) that showed me the nursery, took me, in my way back, through some plantations of *oaks*, which have been made amongst fir-trees. It was, indeed, a plantation of Scotch firs, about twelve years old, in rows, at six feet apart. Every third row of firs was left, and oaks were (about six years ago) planted instead of the firs that were grubbed up; and the winter shelter that the oaks have received from the remaining firs has made them grow very finely, though the land is poor. Other oaks planted in the *open*, *twenty years* ago, and in land deemed better, are not nearly so good. However, these oaks, between the firs, will take fifty or sixty good years to make them timber, and until they be *timber*, they are of very little use; whereas the same ground planted with locusts (and the *hares* of "my lords" kept down) would, at this moment, have been worth fifty pounds an acre. What do "my lords" care about this? For them, for "my lords," the New Forest would be no better than it is now; no, nor *so good* as it is now; for there would be no hares for them.

From New Park, I was bound to Beaulieu Abbey, and I ought to have gone in a southeasterly direction, instead of going back to Lyndhurst, which lay in precisely the opposite direction. My guide through the plantations was not apprised of my intended route, and, therefore, did not instruct me. Just before we parted, he asked me *my name*: I thought it lucky that he had not asked it before! When we got nearly back to Lyndhurst, we found that we had come three miles out of our way; indeed, it made six miles altogether; for we were, when we got to Lyndhurst, three miles further from Beaulieu Abbey than we were when we were at New Park. We wanted, very much, to go to the

site of this ancient and famous abbey, of which the people of the New Forest seemed to know very little. They call the place *Bewley*, and even in the maps it is called *Bauley*. *Ley*, in the Saxon language, means *place*, or rather *open place*:<sup>1</sup> so that they put *ley* in place of *lieu*, thus beating the Normans out of some part of the name at any rate. I wished, besides, to see a good deal of this New Forest. I had been, before, from Southampton to Lyndhurst, from Lyndhurst to Lymington, from Lymington to Sway. I had now come in on the north of Minstead from Romsey, so that I had seen the north of the forest and all the west side of it down to the sea. I had now been to New Park and had got back to Lyndhurst; so that, if I rode across the forest down to Beaulieu I went right across the middle of it, from north-west to south-east. Then, if I turned towards Southampton, and went to Dipten and on to Ealing, I should see, in fact, the whole of this forest, or nearly the whole of it.

We therefore started, or rather turned away from Lyndhurst, as soon as we got back to it, and went about six miles over a heath, even worse than Bagshot Heath; as barren as it is possible for land to be. A little before we came to the village of Beaulieu (which, observe, the people call *Beuley*), we went through a wood, chiefly of beech, and that beech seemingly destined to grow food for pigs, of which we saw, during this day, many, many thousands. I should think that we saw at least a hundred hogs to one deer. I stopped, at one time, and counted the hogs and pigs just round about me, and they amounted to 140, all within 50 or 60 yards of my horse. After a very pleasant ride on land without a stone in it, we came down to the Beaulieu river, the highest branch of which rises at the foot of a hill about a mile and a half to the north-east of Lyndhurst. For a great part of the way down to Beaulieu it is a very insignificant stream. At last, however, augmented by springs from the different sand-hills, it becomes a little river, and has, on the sides of it, lands which were, formerly, very beautiful meadows. When it comes to the village of Beaulieu, it forms a large pond of a great many acres; and on the east side of this pond is the spot where this famous abbey formerly

stood, and where the external walls of which, or a large part of them, are now actually standing. We went down on the western side of the river. The abbey stood, and the ruins stand, on the eastern side.

Happening to meet a man before I got into the village I, pointing with my whip across towards the abbey, said to the man, "I suppose there is a bridge down here to get across to the abbey." "That's not the abbey, sir," says he: "the abbey is about four miles further on." I was astonished to hear this; but he was very positive; said that some people called it the abbey; but that the abbey was further on; and was at a farm occupied by farmer John Biel. Having chapter and verse for it, as the saying is, I believed the man; and pushed on towards farmer John Biel's, which I found, as he had told me, at the end of about four miles. When I got there (not having, observe, gone over the water to ascertain that the other was the spot where the abbey stood), I really thought, at first, that this must have been the site of the Abbey of Beaulieu; because, the name meaning *fine place*, this was a thousand times finer place than that where the abbey, as I afterwards found, really stood. After looking about it for some time, I was satisfied that it had not been an abbey; but the place is one of the finest that ever was seen in this world. It stands at about half a mile's distance from the water's edge at high-water mark, and at about the middle of the space along the coast from Calshot Castle to Lymington haven. It stands, of course, upon a rising ground; it has a gentle slope down to the water. To the right, you see Hurst Castle, and that narrow passage called the Needles, I believe; and, to the left, you see Spithead, and all the ships that are sailing or lie anywhere opposite Portsmouth. The Isle of Wight is right before you, and you have in view, at one and the same time, the towns of Yarmouth, Newton, Cowes, and Newport, with all the beautiful fields of the island, lying upon the side of a great bank before, and going up the ridge of hills in the middle of the island. Here are two little streams, nearly close to the ruin, which filled ponds for fresh-water fish; while there was the Beaulieu river at about half a mile or three quarters of a mile to the left, to bring up the salt-water fish. The ruins consist of part of the walls of a building about 200 feet long and

<sup>1</sup>Cobbett was thinking of *lea* (sometimes *lay* or *ley*), Anglo-Sa *ton leah* (also *leu*), a meadow, or piece of untilled land.



about 40 feet wide. It has been turned into a barn, in part, and the rest into cattle-sheds, cow-pens, and inclosures and walls to inclose a small yard. But there is another ruin which was a church or chapel, and which stands now very near to the farm-house of Mr. John Biel, who rents the farm of the Duchess of Buccleugh, who is now the owner of the abbey-lands and of the lands belonging to this place. The little church or chapel, of which I have just been speaking, appears to have been a very beautiful building. A part only of its walls are standing; but you see, by what remains of the arches, that it was finished in a manner the most elegant and expensive of the day in which it was built. Part of the outside of the building is now surrounded by the farmer's garden; the interior is partly a pig-sty and partly a goose-pen. Under that arch which had once seen so many rich men bow their heads, we entered into the goose-pen, which is by no means one of the *nicest* concerns in the world. Beyond the goose-pen was the pig-sty, and in it a hog which, when fat, will weigh about 30 score, actually rubbing his shoulders against a little sort of column which had supported the font and its holy water. The farmer told us that there was a hole, which, indeed, we saw, going down into the wall, or rather into the column where the font had stood. And he told us that many attempts had been made to bring water to fill that hole, but that it never had been done.

Mr. Biel was very civil to us. As far as related to us, he performed the office of hospitality, which was the main business of those who formerly inhabited the spot. He asked us to dine with him, which we declined, for want of time; but being exceedingly hungry, we had some bread and cheese and some very good beer. The farmer told me that a great number of gentlemen had come there to look at that place; but that he never could find out what the place had been, or what the place at Beuley had been. I told him that I would, when I got to London, give him an account of it; that I would write the account down, and send it down to him. He seemed surprised that I should make such a promise, and expressed his wish not to give me so much trouble. I told him not to say a word about the matter, for that his bread and cheese and beer were so good that they

deserved a full history to be written of the place where they had been eaten and drunk. "God bless me, sir, no, no!" I said I will, upon my soul, farmer. I now left him, very grateful on our part for his hospitable reception, and he, I dare say, hardly being able to believe his own ears at the generous promise that I had made him, which promise, however, I am now about to fulfill. I told the farmer a little, upon the spot, to begin with. I told him that the name was all wrong: that it was not *Beuley* but *Beaulieu*; and that *Beaulieu* meant *fine place*; and I proved this to him in this manner. You know, said I, farmer, that when a girl has a sweetheart, people call him her *beau*? Yes, said he, so they do. Very well. You know also that we say, sometimes, you shall have this in *lieu* of that; and that when we say *lieu*, we mean in place of that. Now the *beau* means *fine*, as applied to the young man, and the *lieu* means *place*; and thus it is, that the name of this place is *Beaulieu*, as it is so fine as you see it is. He seemed to be wonderfully pleased with the discovery; and we parted, I believe, with hearty good wishes on his part, and I am sure with very sincere thanks on my part.

The Abbey of Beaulieu was founded in the year 1204, by King John, for thirty monks of the reformed Benedictine Order. It was dedicated to the blessed Virgin Mary; it flourished until the year 1540, when it was suppressed, and the lands confiscated, in the reign of Henry VIII. Its revenues were, at that time, *four hundred and twenty-eight pounds, six shillings and eight-pence a year*, making in money of the present day upwards of *eight thousand five hundred pounds a year*. The lands and the abbey, and all belonging to it, were granted by the king to one Thomas Wriothesley, who was a court-pander of that day. From him it passed by sale, by will, by marriage or by something or another, till at last it has got, after passing through various hands, into the hands of the Duchess of Buccleugh. So much for the abbey; and now as for the ruins on the farm of Mr. John Biel: they were the dwelling-place of Knights' Templars, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. The building they inhabited was called an hospital, and their business was to relieve travelers, strangers, and persons in distress; and, if called upon, to accompany the king in his wars to uphold Christianity. Their estate



was also confiscated by Henry VIII. It was worth at the time of being confiscated upwards of *two thousand pounds a year*, money of the present day. This establishment was founded a little before the Abbey of Beaulieu was founded; and it was this foundation and not the other that gave the name of Beaulieu to both establishments. The abbey is not situated in a very fine place. The situation is low; the lands above it rather a swamp than otherwise; pretty enough, altogether; but by no means a fine place. The Templars had all the reason in the world to give the name of Beaulieu to their place. And it is by no means surprising that the monks were willing to apply it to their abbey.

Now, farmer John Biel, I dare say, that you are a very good Protestant; and I am a monstrous good Protestant too. We cannot bear the pope, nor "they there priests that makes men confess their sins and go down upon their marrow-bones before them." But, master Biel, let us give the devil his due; and let us not act worse by those Roman Catholics (who, by the bye, were our forefathers) than we are willing to act by the devil himself. Now then, here were a set of monks, and also a set of Knights' Templars. Neither of them could marry; of course, neither of them could have wives and families. They could possess no private property; they could bequeath nothing; they could own nothing, but that which they owned in common with the rest of their body. They could hoard no money; they could save nothing. Whatever they received, as rent for their lands, they must necessarily spend upon the spot, for they never could quit that spot. They did spend it all upon the spot: they kept all the poor; Beuley, and all round about Beuley, saw no misery, and had never heard the damned name of pauper pronounced, as long as those monks and Templars continued! You and I are excellent Protestants, farmer John Biel; you and I have often assisted on the 5th of November to burn Guy Fawkes, the pope, and the devil. But you and I, farmer John Biel, would much rather be life-holders under monks and Templars, than rack-renters under duchesses. The monks and the knights were the *lords* of their manors; but the farmers under them were not rack-renters; the farmers under them held by lease of lives, continued in the same farms from father to son for

hundreds of years; they were real yeomen, and not miserable rack-renters, such as now till the land of this once happy country, and who are little better than the drivers of the laborers for the profit of the landlords. Farmer John Biel, what the Duchess of Buccleugh does you know, and I do not. She may, for anything that I know to the contrary, leave her farms on lease of lives, with rents so very moderate and easy as for the farm to be half as good as the farmer's own, at any rate. The duchess may, for anything that I know to the contrary, feed all the hungry, clothe all the naked, comfort all the sick, and prevent the hated name of *pauper* from being pronounced in the district of Beuley; her grace may, for anything that I know to the contrary, make poor-rates to be wholly unnecessary and unknown in your country; she may receive, lodge, and feed the stranger; she may, in short, employ the rents of this fine estate of Beuley to make the whole district happy; she may not carry a farthing of the rents away from the spot; and she may consume, by herself, and her own family and servants, only just as much as is necessary to the preservation of their life and health. Her grace may do all this; I do not say or insinuate that she does not do it all; but, Protestant here or Protestant there, farmer John Biel, this I do say, that unless her grace do all this, the monks and the Templars were better for Beuley than her grace.

From the former station of the Templars, from real Beaulieu of the New Forest, we came back to the village of Beaulieu, and there crossed the water to come on towards Southampton. Here we passed close along under the old abbey walls, a great part of which are still standing. There is a mill here which appears to be turned by the fresh water, but the fresh water falls, here, into the salt water, as at the village of Botley.<sup>1</sup> We did not stop to go about the ruins of the abbey; for you seldom make much out by minute inquiry. It is the political history of these places, or, at least, their connection with political events, that is interesting. Just about the banks of this little river there are some woods and coppices and some corn-land; but at the distance of half a mile from the water-side we came out again upon the in-

<sup>1</sup>Where Cobbett had a farm from 1805 until his bankruptcy in 1820.

tolerable heath, and went on for seven or eight miles over that heath, from the village of Beaulieu to that of Marchwood, having a list of trees and enclosed lands away to our right all the way along, which list of trees from the south-west side of that arm of the sea which goes from Calshot Castle to Redbridge, passing by Southampton, which lies on the north-east side. Never was a more barren tract of land than these seven or eight miles. We had come seven miles across the forest in another direction in the morning; so that a poorer spot than this New Forest there is not in all England; nor, I believe, in the whole world. It is more barren and miserable than Bagshot Heath. There are less fertile spots in it in proportion to the extent of each. Still it is so large, it is of such great extent, being, if molded into a circle, not so little, I believe, as 60 or 70 miles in circumference, that it must contain some good spots of land, and if properly and honestly managed those spots must produce a prodigious quantity of timber. It is a pretty curious thing that while the admirers of the paper-system are boasting of our "*waust<sup>1</sup> improvements, ma'am,*" there should have been such a visible and such an enormous dilapidation in all the solid things of the country. I have, in former parts of this ride, stated that in some counties, while the parsons have been pocketing the amount of the tithes and of the glebe, they have suffered the parsonage-houses either to fall down and to be lost, brick by brick and stone by stone, or to become such miserable places as to be unfit for anything bearing the name of a gentleman to live in; I have stated, and I am at any time ready to prove, that in some counties this is the case in more than one half of the parishes!

And now, amidst all these "*waust improvements,*" let us see how the account of timber stands in the New Forest! In the year 1608, a survey of the timber in the New Forest was made, when there were loads of oak timber fit for the navy, 315,477. Mark that, reader. Another survey was taken in the year 1783; that is to say, in the glorious jubilee reign.

And when there were, in this same New Forest, loads of oak timber fit for the navy, 20,830. "*Waust improvement, ma'am,*" under "*the pilot that weathered the storm,*" and in the reign of jubilee! What the devil, some one would say, could have become of all this timber? Does the reader observe, that there were 315,477 loads? and does he observe that a load is *fifty-two cubic feet*? Does the reader know what is the price of this load of timber? I suppose it is now, taking in lop, top and bark, and bought upon the spot (timber fit for the navy, mind!), ten pounds a load at the least. But let us suppose that it has been, upon an average, since the year 1608, just the time that the Stuarts were mounting the throne; let us suppose that it has been, on an average, four pounds a load. Here is a pretty tough sum of money. This must have gone into the pockets of somebody. At any rate, if we had the same quantity of timber now that we had when the Protestant Reformation took place, or even when old Betsy turned up her toes, we should be now three millions of money richer than we are; not in bills; not in notes payable to bearer on demand; not in Scotch "*cash credits*"; not, in short, in lies, falseness, impudence, downright blackguard cheatery and mining shares and "*Greek cause*" and the devil knows what.

I shall have occasion to return to this New Forest, which is, in reality, though, in general, a very barren district, a much more interesting object to Englishmen than are the services of my Lord Palmerston, and the warlike undertakings of Burdett, Galloway and Company; but I cannot quit this spot, even for the present, without asking the Scotch population-mongers and Malthus and his crew, and especially George Chalmers, if he should yet be creeping about upon the face of the earth, what becomes of all their notions of the scantiness of the ancient population of England; what becomes of all these notions, of all their bundles of ridiculous lies about the fewness of the people in former times; what becomes of them all, if historians have told us one word of truth with regard to the formation of the New Forest by William the Conqueror. All the historians say, every one of them says, that this king destroyed several populous towns and villages in order to make this New Forest.

<sup>1</sup>Vast. The improvements were to be found in urban and suburban development, for which Cobbett thought "*tax-taters*" (those whose income was derived from the taxes) were chiefly responsible. It was, in his opinion, an undesirable "*improvement*," and the worse because it was effected, he thought, at the expense of the land-owners and farmers.

# ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN, AND (INCIDENTALLY) TO YOUNG WOMEN, IN THE MIDDLE AND HIGHER RANKS OF LIFE<sup>1</sup>

## I. TO A YOUTH

38. HITHERTO I have addressed you chiefly relative to the things to be *avoided*: let me now 10 turn to the things which you ought to do. And, first of all, the *husbanding of your time*. The respect that you will receive, the real and *sincere respect*, will depend entirely on what you are able to do. If you be rich, you 15 may purchase what is called respect; but it is not worth having. To obtain respect worth possessing, you must, as I observed before, do more than the common run of men in your state of life; and, to be enabled to do 20 this, you must manage well *your time*: and, to manage it well, you must have as much of the *day-light* and as little of the *candle-light* as is consistent with the due discharge of your duties. When people get into the habit 25 of sitting up *merely for the purpose of talking*, it is no easy matter to break themselves of it: and if they do not go to bed early, they cannot rise early. Young people require more sleep than those that are grown up: there 30 must be the number of hours, and that number cannot well be, on an average, less than *eight*: and, if it be more in winter time, it is all the better; for, an hour in bed is better than an hour spent over fire and candle in 35 an idle gossip. People never should sit talking till they do not know what to talk about. It is said by the country-people, that one hour's sleep before midnight is worth more than two are worth after midnight, and this 40 I believe to be a fact; but it is useless to go to bed early and even to rise early, if the time be not well employed after rising. In general, half the morning is *loitered* away, the party being in a sort of half-dressed half-naked 45 state; out of bed, indeed, but still in a sort of bedding. Those who first invented *morn-ing-gowns* and *slippers* could have very little else to do. These things are very suitable to those who have had fortunes gained for them 50 by others; very suitable to those who have nothing to do, and who merely live for the

purpose of assisting to consume the produce of the earth; but he who has his bread to earn, or who means to be worthy of respect on account of his labors, has no business with morn- 5 ing-gown and slippers. In short, be your business or calling what it may, *dress at once for the day*; and learn to do it *as quickly* as possible. A looking-glass is a piece of furniture a great deal worse than useless. *Looking* at the face will not alter its shape or its color; and, perhaps, of all wasted time, none is so foolishly wasted as that which is employed in surveying one's own face. Nothing can be of *little* importance, if one be compelled to 15 attend to it *every day of our lives*; if we *shaved* but once a year, or once a month, the execution of the thing would be hardly worth naming: but this is a piece of work that must be done once every day; and, as it may cost only about *five minutes* of time, and may be, and frequently is, made to cost *thirty*, or even *fifty minutes*; and, as only fifteen minutes make about a fifty-eighth part of the hours of our average daylight; this being the case, 25 this is a matter of real importance. I once heard Sir John Sinclair ask Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, whether he meant to have a son of his (then a little boy) taught Latin. "No," said Mr. Johnstone, "but I mean to do something a great deal better for him." "What is that?" said Sir John. "Why," said the other, "teach him *to shave with cold water and without a glass*." Which, I dare say, he did; and for which benefit I am sure that son has 35 had good reason to be grateful. Only think of the inconvenience attending the common practice! There must be *hot water*; to have this there must be a *fire*, and, in some cases, a fire for that purpose alone; to have these, there must be a *servant*, or you must light a fire yourself. For the want of these, the job is put off until a later hour: this causes a strip- 40 ping and *another dressing bout*; or, you go in a slovenly state all that day, and the next day the thing must be done, or cleanliness must be abandoned altogether. If you be on a journey you must wait the pleasure of the servants at the inn before you can dress and set out in the morning; the pleasant time for 45 traveling is gone before you can move from the spot; instead of being at the end of your day's journey in good time, you are benighted, and have to endure all the great inconveniences attendant on tardy movements. And,

<sup>1</sup>This was first published in parts in 1829 and 1830.



all this, from the apparently insignificant affair of shaving! How many a piece of important business has failed from a short delay! And how many thousand of such delays daily proceed from this unworthy cause! "*Toujours prêt*" was the motto of a famous French general; and pray let it be yours: be "*always ready*"; and never, during your whole life, have to say, "*I cannot go till I be shaved and dressed.*" Do the whole at once for the day, whatever may be your state of life; and then you have a day unbroken by those indispensable performances. Begin thus, in the days of your youth, and, having felt the superiority which this practice will give you over those in all other respects your equals, the practice will stick by you to the end of your life. Till you be shaved and dressed for the day, you cannot set steadily about any business; you know that you must presently quit your labor to return to the dressing affair; you, therefore, put it off until that be over; the interval, the precious interval, is spent in lounging about; and, by the time that you are ready for business, the best part of the day is gone.

39. Trifling as this matter appears upon naming it, it is, in fact, one of the great concerns of life; and, for my part, I can truly say, that I owe more of my great labors to my strict adherence to the precepts that I have here given you, than to all the natural abilities with which I have been endowed; for these, whatever may have been their amount, would have been of comparatively little use, even aided by great sobriety and abstinence, if I had not, in early life, contracted the blessed habit of husbanding well my time. To this, more than to any other thing, I owed my very extraordinary promotion in the army. I was always ready: if I had to mount guard at ten, I was ready at nine: never did any man, or any thing, wait one moment for me. Being, at an age under twenty years,<sup>1</sup> raised from Corporal to Serjeant Major at once, over the heads of thirty serjeants, I naturally should have been an object of envy and hatred; but this habit of early rising and of rigid adherence to the precepts which I have given you, really subdued these passions; because everyone felt, that what I did he had never done, and never could do. \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup>More probably over twenty-two.

44. The next thing is the GRAMMAR of your own language. Without understanding this, you can never hope to become fit for anything beyond mere trade or agriculture. It is true, that we do (God knows!) but too often see men have great wealth, high titles, and boundless power heaped upon them, who can hardly write ten lines together correctly; but, remember, it is not merit that has been the cause of their advancement; the cause has been, in almost every such case, the subserviency of the party to the will of some government, and the baseness of some nation who have quietly submitted to be governed by brazen fools. Do not you imagine, that you will have luck of this sort: do not you hope to be rewarded and honored for that ignorance which shall prove a scourge to your country, and which will earn you the curses of the children yet unborn. Rely you upon your merit, and upon nothing else. Without a knowledge of grammar, it is impossible for you to write correctly, and it is by mere accident if you speak correctly; and, pray bear in mind, that all well-informed persons judge of a man's mind (until they have other means of judging) by his writing or speaking. The labor necessary to acquire this knowledge is, indeed, not trifling: grammar is not, like arithmetic, a science consisting of several distinct departments, some of which may be dispensed with: it is a whole, and the whole must be learned, or no part is learned. The subject is abstruse: it demands much reflection and much patience: but, when once the task is performed, it is performed for life, and in every day of that life it will be found to be, in a greater or less degree, a source of pleasure or of profit or of both together. And, what is the labor? It consists of no bodily exertion; it exposes the student to no cold, no hunger, no suffering of any sort. The study need subtract from the hours of no business, nor, indeed, from the hours of necessary exercise: the hours usually spent on the tea and coffee slops<sup>2</sup> and in the mere gossip which accompany them; those wasted hours of only one year, employed in the study of English grammar, would make you a correct speaker and writer for the rest of your life. You want no

<sup>2</sup>Cobbett had no tolerance for these drinks. In *Cottage Economy* (1822) he had denounced tea fiercely and without qualification. He thought home-brewed beer a much more wholesome drink. At the very end of his life, however, he did drink tea.

school, no room to study in, no expenses, and no troublesome circumstances of any sort. I learned grammar when I was a private soldier on the pay of sixpence a day. The edge of my berth, or that of the guard-bed, was my seat to study in; my knapsack was my book-case; a bit of board, lying on my lap, was my writing-table; and the task did not demand anything like a year of my life. I had no money to purchase candle or oil; in winter-time it was rarely that I could get any evening-light but that of *the fire*, and only my *turn* even of that. And if I, under such circumstances, and without parent or friend to advise or encourage me, accomplished this undertaking, what excuse can there be for *any youth*, however poor, however pressed with business, or however circumstanced as to room or other conveniences? To buy a pen or a sheet of paper I was compelled to forgo some portion of food, though in a state of half-starvation; I had no moment of time that I could call my own; and I had to read and to write amidst the talking, laughing, singing, whistling, and brawling of at least half a score of the most thoughtless of men, and that too in the hours of their freedom from all control. Think not lightly of the *farthing* that I had to give, now and then, for ink, pen, or paper! That farthing was, alas! a *great sum* to me! I was as tall as I am now; I had great health and great exercise. The whole of the money, not expended for us at market, was *two-pence a week* for each man. I remember, and well I may! that upon one occasion I, after all absolutely necessary expenses, had, on a Friday, made shift to have a half-penny in reserve, which I had destined for the purchase of a *red-herring* in the morning; but, when I pulled off my clothes at night, so hungry then as to be hardly able to endure life, I found that I had *lost my half-penny*! I buried my head under the miserable sheet and rug, and cried like a child! And, again I say, if I, under circumstances like these, could encounter and overcome this task, is there, can there be, in the whole world, a youth to find an excuse for the non-performance? What youth, who shall read this, will not be ashamed to say, that he is not able to find time and opportunity for this most essential of all the branches of book-learning?

45. I press this matter with such earnestness, because a knowledge of grammar is the

foundation of all literature; and because without this knowledge opportunities for writing and speaking are only occasions for men to display their unfitness to write and speak. How many false pretenders to erudition have I exposed to shame merely by my knowledge of grammar! How many of the insolent and ignorant great and powerful have I pulled down and made little and despicable! And with what ease have I conveyed, upon numerous important subjects, information and instruction to millions now alive, and provided a store of both for millions yet unborn! As to the course to be pursued in this great undertaking, it is, first, to read the grammar from the first word to the last, very attentively, several times over: then, to copy the whole of it very correctly and neatly; and then to study the Chapters one by one. And what do this reading and writing require as to time? Both together not more than the tea-slops and their gossips for *three months*! There are about three hundred pages in my *English Grammar*.<sup>1</sup> Four of those little pages in a day, which is a mere trifle of work, do the thing in *three months*. Two hours a day are quite sufficient for the purpose; and these may, in any *town* that I have ever known, or in any village, be taken from that part of the morning during which the main part of the people are in bed. I do not like the evening-candle-light work: it wears the eyes much more than the same sort of light in the morning, because then the faculties are in vigor and wholly unexhausted. But for this purpose there is sufficient of that day-light which is usually wasted; usually gossiped or lounged away; or spent in some other manner productive of no pleasure, and generally producing pain in the end. It is very becoming in all persons, and particularly in the young, to be civil, and even polite: but it becomes neither young nor old to have an everlasting simper on their faces, and their bodies sawing in an everlasting bow: and how many youths have I seen who, if they had spent, in the learning of grammar, a tenth part of the time that they have consumed in earning merited contempt for their affected gentility, would have laid the foundation of sincere respect towards them for the whole of their lives!

46. *Perseverance* is a prime quality in every pursuit, and particularly in this. Yours is,

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1817.

too, the time of life to acquire this inestimable habit. Men fail much oftener from want of perseverance than from want of talent and of good disposition: as the race was not to the hare but to the tortoise, so the meed of success in study is to him who is not in haste, but to him who proceeds with a steady and even step. It is not to a want of taste or of desire or of disposition to learn that we have to ascribe the rareness of good scholars, so much as to the want of patient perseverance. Grammar is a branch of knowledge; like all other things of high value, it is of difficult acquirement: the study is dry; the subject is intricate; it engages not the passions; and, if the *great end* be not kept constantly in view; if you lose, for a moment, sight of the *ample reward*, indifference begins, that is followed by weariness, and disgust and despair close the book. To guard against this result be not in *haste*; keep *steadily on*; and, when you find weariness approaching, rouse yourself, and remember, that if you give up, all that you have done has been done in vain. This is a matter of great moment; for out of every ten, who undertake this task, there are, perhaps, nine who abandon it in despair; and this, too, merely for the want of resolution to overcome the first approaches of weariness. The most effectual means of security against this mortifying result is to lay down a rule to write or to read a certain fixed quantity *every day*, Sunday excepted. Our minds are not always in the same state; they have not, at all times, the same elasticity; to-day we are full of hope on the very same grounds which, to-morrow, afford us no hope at all: every human being is liable to those flows and ebbs of the mind; but, if reason interfere, and bid you *overcome the fits of lassitude*, and almost mechanically to go on without the stimulus of hope, the buoyant fit speedily returns; you congratulate yourself that you did not yield to the temptation to abandon your pursuit, and you proceed with more vigor than ever. Five or six triumphs over temptation to indolence or despair lay the foundation of certain success; and, what is of still more importance, fix in you the *habit of perseverance*.

## II. TO A YOUNG MAN

76. HISTORY, however, is by no means the only thing about which every man's leisure

furnishes him with the means of reading; besides which, every man has not the same taste. Poetry, geography, moral essays, the divers subjects of philosophy, travels, natural history, books on sciences; and, in short, the whole range of book-knowledge is before you; but there is one thing always to be guarded against; and that is, not to admire and applaud anything you read, merely because it is the *fashion* to admire and applaud it. Read, consider well what you read, form *your own judgment*, and stand by that judgment in despite of the sayings of what are called learned men, until fact or argument be offered to convince you of your error. One writer praises another; and it is very possible for writers so to combine as to cry down and, in some sort, to destroy the reputation of any one who meddles with the combination, unless the person thus assailed be blessed with uncommon talent and uncommon perseverance. When I read the works of Pope and of Swift, I was greatly delighted with their lashing of Dennis; but wondered, at the same time, why they should have taken so much pains in running down such a *fool*. By the merest accident in the world, being at a tavern in the woods of America, I took up an old book, in order to pass away the time while my traveling companions were drinking in the next room; but seeing the book contained the criticisms of Dennis, I was about to lay it down, when the play of *Cato* caught my eye; and having been accustomed to read books in which this play was lauded to the skies, and knowing it to have been written by Addison, every line of whose works I had been taught to believe teemed with wisdom and genius, I condescended to begin to read, though the work was from the pen of that *fool* Dennis. I read on, and soon began to *laugh*, not at Dennis, but at Addison. I laughed so much and so loud, that the landlord, who was in the passage, came in to see what I was laughing at. In short, I found it a most masterly production, one of the most witty things that I had ever read in my life. I was delighted with Dennis, and was heartily ashamed of my former admiration of *Cato*, and felt no little resentment against Pope and Swift for their endless reviling of this most able and witty critic. This, as far as I recollect, was the first *emancipation* that had assisted me in my reading. I have, since that time, never taken



anything upon trust: I have judged for myself, trusting neither to the opinions of writers nor in the fashions of the day. Having been told by Dr. Blair, in his lectures on Rhetoric, that, if I meant to write correctly, I must "give my days and nights to Addison," I read a few numbers of the *Spectator* at the time I was writing my *English Grammar*: I gave neither my nights nor my days to him; but I found an abundance of matter to afford examples of *false grammar*; and, upon a re-perusal, I found that the criticisms of Dennis might have been extended to this book too.

### III. TO A LOVER

88. \* \* \* You should never forget, that marriage, which is a state that every young person ought to have in view, is a thing to last *for life*; and that, generally speaking, it is to make life *happy*, or *miserable*; for, though a man may bring his mind to something nearly a state of *indifference*, even *that* is misery, except with those who can hardly be reckoned amongst sensitive beings. Marriage brings numerous *cares*, which are amply compensated by the more numerous delights which are their companions. But to have the delights, as well as the cares, the choice of the partner must be fortunate. I say *fortunate*; for, after all, love, real love, impassioned affection, is an ingredient so absolutely necessary, that no *perfect* reliance can be placed on the judgment. Yet, the judgment may do something; reason may have some influence; and, therefore, I here offer you my advice with regard to the exercise of that reason.

89. The things which you ought to desire in a wife are, 1. Chastity; 2. sobriety; 3. industry; 4. frugality; 5. cleanliness; 6. knowledge of domestic affairs; 7. good temper; 8. beauty.

91. SOBRIETY. By *sobriety* I do not mean merely an absence of *drinking to a state of intoxication*; for, if that be *hateful* in a man, what must it be in a woman! There is a Latin proverb, which says, that wine, that is to say, intoxication, *brings forth truth*. Whatever it may do in this way, in men, in women it is sure, unless prevented by age or by salutary ugliness, to produce a moderate, and a *very moderate*, portion of chastity. There never was a drunken woman, a woman who loved strong drink, who was chaste, if

the opportunity of being the contrary presented itself to her. There are cases where *health* requires wine, and even small portions of more ardent liquor; but (reserving what I have further to say on this point, till I come to the conduct of the husband) *young* unmarried women can seldom stand in need of these stimulants; and, at any rate, only in cases of well-known definite ailments. Wine! "Only a glass or two of wine at dinner, or so"! As soon as have married a girl whom I had thought liable to be persuaded to drink, habitually, "only a glass or two of wine at dinner, or so"; as soon as have *married* such a girl, I would have taken a strumpet from the streets. And it has not required *age* to give me this way of thinking: it has always been rooted in my mind from the moment that I began to think the girls prettier than posts. There are few things so disgusting as a guzzling woman. A gormandizing one is bad enough; but, one who tips off the liquor with an appetite, and exclaims "good! good!" by a smack of her lips, is fit for nothing but a brothel. There may be cases, amongst the *hard-laboring* women, such as *reapers*, for instance, especially when they have children at the breast; there may be cases, where very *hard-working* women may stand in need of a little *good* beer; beer, which, if taken in immoderate quantities, would produce intoxication. But, while I only allow the *possibility* of the existence of such cases, I deny the necessity of any strong drink at all in every other case. Yet, in this metropolis,<sup>1</sup> it is the general custom for tradesmen, journeymen, and even laborers, to have regularly on their tables the big brewers' poison, twice in every day, and at the rate of not less than a pot to a person, women, as well as men, as the allowance for the day. A pot of poison a day, at fivepence the pot, amounts to *seven pounds and two shillings* in the year! Man and wife suck down, in this way, *fourteen pounds four shillings* a year! Is it any wonder that they are clad in rags, that they are skin and bone, and that their children are covered with filth?

92. But by the word SOBRIETY, in a young woman, I mean a great deal more than even a rigid abstinence from that love of *drink*, which I am not to suppose, and which I do not believe, to exist anything like generally

<sup>1</sup>London.

amongst the young women of this country. I mean a great deal more than this; I mean *sobriety of conduct*. The word *sober*, and its derivatives, do not confine themselves to matters of *drink*: they express *steadiness*, *seriousness*, *carefulness*, *scrupulous propriety of conduct*; and they are thus used amongst country people in many parts of England. When a Somersetshire fellow makes too free with a girl, she reproves him with, "Come! be *sober*!" And when we wish a team, or anything, to be moved on *steadily* and with *great care*, we cry out to the carter, or other operator, "*Soberly, soberly*." Now, this species of sobriety is a great qualification in the person you mean to make your wife. Skipping, capering, romping, rattling girls are very amusing where all costs and other consequences are out of the question; and they may become *sober* in the Somersetshire sense of the word. But while you have *no certainty* of this, you have a presumptive argument on the other side. To be sure, when girls are *mere children*, they are to play and romp like children. But, when they arrive at that age which turns their thoughts towards that sort of connection which is to be theirs for life; when they begin to think of having the command of a house, however small or poor, it is time for them to cast away the levity of the child. It is natural, nor is it very wrong, that I know of, for children to like to gad about and to see all sorts of strange sights, though I do not approve of this even in children: but, if I could not have found a *young woman* (and I am sure I never should have married an *old* one) who I was not *sure* possessed *all* the qualities expressed by the word sobriety, I should have remained a bachelor to the end of that life, which, in that case, would, I am satisfied, have terminated without my having performed a thousandth part of those labors which have been, and are, in spite of all political prejudice, the wonder of all who have seen, or heard of, them. Scores of gentlemen have, at different times, expressed to me their surprise, that I was "*always in spirits*"; that nothing *pulled me down*; and the truth is, that, throughout nearly forty years of troubles, losses, and crosses, assailed all the while by more numerous and powerful enemies than ever man had before to contend with, and performing, at the same time, labors greater than man ever before performed; all those labors requiring mental exertion, and some of them mental exertion of the highest order; the truth is, that, throughout the whole of this long time of troubles and of labors, I have never known a single hour of *real anxiety*; the troubles have been no troubles to me; I have not known what *lowness of spirits* meant; have been more gay, and felt less care, than any bachelor that ever lived. "You are *always in spirits*, Cobbett!" To be sure; for why should I not? *Poverty* I have always set at defiance, and I could, therefore, defy the temptations of riches; and, as to *home and children*, I had taken care to provide myself with an inexhaustible store of that "*sobriety*," which I am so strongly recommending my reader to provide himself with; or, if he cannot do that, to deliberate long before he ventures on the life-enduring matrimonial voyage. This sobriety is a title to *trustworthiness*; and this, young man, is the treasure that you ought to prize far above all others. Miserable is the husband, who, when he crosses the threshold of his house, carries with him doubts and fears and suspicions. I do not mean suspicions of the *fidelity* of his wife, but of her care, frugality, attention to his interests, and to the health and morals of his children. Miserable is the man, who cannot leave *all unlocked*, and who is not *sure*, quite certain, that all is as safe as if grasped in his own hand. He is the happy husband, who can go away, at a moment's warning, leaving his house and his family with as little anxiety as he quits an inn, not more fearing to find, on his return, anything wrong, than he would fear a discontinuance of the rising and setting of the sun, and if, as in my case, leaving books and papers all lying about at sixes and sevens, finding them arranged in proper order, and the room, during the lucky interval, freed from the effects of his and his plowman's or gardener's dirty shoes. Such a man has no *real cares*; such a man has *no troubles*; and this is the sort of life that I have led. I have had all the numerous and indescribable delights of home and children, and, at the same time, all the bachelor's freedom from domestic cares: and to this cause, far more than to any other, my readers owe those labors, which I never could have performed, if even the slightest degree of want of confidence at home had ever once entered into my mind.

93. But, in order to possess this precious *trustworthiness*, you must, if you can, exercise your *reason* in the choice of your partner. If she be vain of her person, very fond of dress, fond of *flattery*, at all given to gadding 5 about, fond of what are called *parties of pleasure*, or coquettish, though in the least degree; if either of these, she never will be trustworthy; she cannot change her nature; and if you marry her, you will be *unjust* if you expect 10 trustworthiness at her hands. But, besides this, even if you find in her that innate "*sobriety*," of which I have been speaking, there requires on your part, and that at once too, confidence and trust without any limit. 15 Confidence is, in this case, nothing unless it be reciprocal. To have a trustworthy wife, you must begin by showing her, even before you are married, that you have no suspicions, no fears, no doubts, with regard to her. 20 Many a man has been discarded by a virtuous girl, merely on account of his querulous conduct. All women despise jealous men; and, if they marry such their motive is other than that of affection. Therefore, *begin* by proofs 25 of unlimited confidence; and, as *example* may serve to assist precept, and as I never have preached that which I have not practiced, I will give you the history of my own conduct in this respect.

94. When I first saw my wife, she was *thirteen years old*, and I was within about a month of *twenty-one*.<sup>1</sup> She was the daughter of a Serjeant of artillery, and I was the Serjeant-Major of a regiment of foot, both stationed 35 in forts near the city of St. John, in the Province of New Brunswick. I sat in the same room with her, for about an hour, in company with others, and I made up my mind that she was the very girl for me. That 40 I thought her beautiful is certain, for that I had always said should be an indispensable qualification; but I saw in her what I deemed marks of that sobriety of conduct of which I have said so much, and which has been by 45 far the greatest blessing of my life. It was now dead of winter, and, of course, the snow several feet deep on the ground, and the weather piercing cold. It was my habit, when I had done my morning's writing, to 50 go out at break of day to take a walk on a hill at the foot of which our barracks lay. In

about three mornings after I had first seen her, I had, by an invitation to breakfast with me, got up two young men to join me in my walk; and our road lay by the house of her father and mother. It was hardly light, but she was out on the snow, scrubbing out a washing-tub. "That's the girl for me," said I, when we had got out of her hearing. One of these young men came to England, soon afterwards; and he, who keeps an inn in Yorkshire, came over to Preston, at the time of the election, to verify whether I were the same man. When he found that I was, he appeared surprised; but what was his surprise, when I told him that those tall young men, whom he saw around me, were the *sons* of that pretty little girl that he and I saw scrubbing out the washing-tub on the snow in New Brunswick at day-break in the morning!

95. From the day that I first spoke to her, I never had a thought of her ever being the wife of any other man, more than I had a thought of her being transformed into a chest of drawers; and I formed my resolution at once, to marry her as soon as we could get permission, and to get out of the army as soon as I could. So that this matter was, at once, settled as firmly as if written in the book of fate. At the end of about six months, 30 my regiment, and I along with it, were removed to Frederickton, a distance of a *hundred miles*, up the river of St. John; and, which was worse, the artillery were expected to go off to England a year or two before our regiment! The artillery went, and she along with them; and now it was that I acted a part becoming a real and sensible lover. I was aware, that, when she got to that gay place Woolwich, the house of her father and mother, necessarily visited by numerous persons not the most select, might become unpleasant to her, and I did not like, besides, that she should continue to *work hard*. I had saved a *hundred and fifty guineas*, the earnings of my early hours, in writing for the paymaster, the quartermaster, and others, in addition to the savings of my own pay. I *sent her all my money*, before she sailed; and wrote to her to beg of her, if she found her home uncomfortable, to hire a lodging with respectable people: 40 and, at any rate, not to spare the money, by any means, but to buy herself good clothes, and to live without hard work, until I arrived in England; and I, in order to induce

<sup>1</sup>Probably rather twenty-three.



her to lay out the money, told her that I should get plenty more before I came home.

96. As the malignity of the devil would have it, we were kept abroad *two years longer* than our time, Mr. Pitt (England not being so tame then as she is now) having knocked up a dust with Spain about Nootka Sound. Oh, how I cursed Nootka Sound, and poor bawling Pitt too, I am afraid! At the end of *four years*, however, home I came; landed at Portsmouth, and got my discharge from the army by the great kindness of poor Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who was then the Major of my regiment. I found my little girl a *servant of all work* (and hard work it was), at *five pounds a year*, in the house of a Captain Brisac; and, without hardly saying a word about the matter, she put into my hands *the whole of my hundred and fifty guineas unbroken!*

97. Need I tell the reader what my feelings were? Need I tell kind-hearted English parents what effect this anecdote *must* have produced on the minds of our children? Need I attempt to describe what effect this example ought to have on every young woman who shall do me the honor to read this book? Admiration of her conduct, and self-gratulation on this indubitable proof of the soundness of my own judgment, were now added to my love of her beautiful person.

98. Now, I do not say that there are not many young women of this country who would, under similar circumstances, have acted as my wife did in this case; on the contrary, I hope, and do sincerely believe, that there are. But when *her age* is considered; when we reflect, that she was living in a place crowded, literally *crowded*, with gaily-dressed and handsome young men, many of whom really far richer and in higher rank than I was, and scores of them ready to offer her their hand; when we reflect that she was living amongst young women who put upon their backs every shilling that they could come at; when we see her keeping the bag of gold untouched, and working hard to provide herself with but mere necessary apparel, and doing this while she was passing from *fourteen to eighteen years of age*; when we view the whole of the circumstances, we must say that here is an example, which, while it reflects honor on her sex, ought to have weight with every young woman whose eyes or ears this relation shall reach.

99. If any young man imagine, that this great *sobriety of conduct* in young women must be accompanied with seriousness approaching to *gloom*, he is, according to my experience and observation, very much deceived. The *contrary* is the fact; for I have found that as, amongst men, your jovial companions are, except over the bottle, the dullest and most insipid of souls; so amongst women, the gay, rattling, and laughing, are, unless some party of pleasure, or something out of domestic life, is going on, generally in the dumps and blue-devils. Some *stimulus* is always craved after by this description of women; some sight to be seen, something to see or hear other than what is to be found at *home*, which, as it affords no incitement, nothing "*to raise and keep up the spirits*," is looked upon merely as a place *to be at* for want of a better; merely a place for eating and drinking, and the like; merely a biding-place whence to sally in search of enjoyments. A greater curse than a wife of this description, it would be somewhat difficult to find; and, in your character of Lover, you are to provide against it. I hate a dull, melancholy, moping thing: I could not have existed in the same house with such a thing for a single month. The mopers are, too, all giggle at other times: the gayety is for others, and the moping for the husband, to comfort him, happy man, when he is alone: plenty of smiles and of badinage for others, and for him to participate with others; but the moping is reserved exclusively for him. One hour she is capering about, as if rehearsing a jig; and, the next, sighing to the motion of a lazy needle, or weeping over a novel; and this is called *sentiment!* Music, indeed! Give me a mother singing to her clean and fat and rosy baby, and making the house ring with her extravagant and hyperbolic encomiums on it. That is the music which is "*the food of love*"; and not the formal, pedantic noises, an affectation of skill in which is now-a-days the ruin of half the young couples in the middle rank of life. Let any man observe, as I so frequently have, with delight, the excessive fondness of the laboring people for their children. Let him observe with what pride they dress them out on a Sunday, with means deducted from their own scanty meals. Let him observe the husband, who has toiled all the week like a horse, nursing the

baby, while the wife is preparing the bit of dinner. Let him observe them both abstaining from a sufficiency, lest the children should feel the pinchings of hunger. Let him observe, in short, the whole of their demeanor, the real mutual affection, evinced, not in words, but in unequivocal deeds. Let him observe these things, and, having then cast a look at the lives of the great and wealthy, he will say, with me, that, when a man is choosing his partner for life, the dread of poverty ought to be cast to the winds. A laborer's cottage, on a Sunday; the husband or wife having a baby in arms, looking at two or three older ones playing between the flower-borders going from the wicket to the door, is, according to my taste, the most interesting object that eyes ever beheld; and, it is an object to be beheld in no country upon earth but England. In France, a laborer's cottage means a *shed* with a *dung-heap* before the door; and it means much about the same in America, where it is wholly inexcusable. In riding once, about five years ago, from Petworth to Horsham, on a Sunday in the afternoon, I came to a solitary cottage which stood at about twenty yards' distance from the road. There was the wife with the baby in her arms, the husband teaching another child to walk, while *four* more were at play before them. I stopped and looked at them for some time, and then, turning my horse, rode up to the wicket, getting into talk by asking the distance to Horsham. I found that the man worked chiefly in the woods, and that he was doing pretty well. The wife was then only *twenty-two*, and the man only *twenty-five*. She was a pretty woman, even for *Sussex*, which, not excepting Lancashire, contains the prettiest women in England. He was a very fine and stout young man. "Why," said I, "how many children do you reckon to have at last?" "I do not care how many," said the man: "God never sends mouths without sending meat." "Did you ever hear," said I, "of one Parson Malthus?" "No, sir." "Why, if he were to hear of your works, he would be outrageous; for he wants an act of Parliament to prevent poor people from marrying young, and from having such lots of children." "Oh! the brute!" exclaimed the wife; while the husband laughed, thinking that I was joking. I asked the man whether he had ever had

*relief from the parish*; and upon his answering in the negative, I took out my purse, took from it enough to bait my horse at Horsham, and to clear my turnpikes to Worth, whither I was going in order to stay awhile, and gave him all the rest. Now, is it not a shame, is it not a sin of all sins, that people like these should, by acts of the government, be reduced to such misery as to be induced to abandon their homes and their country, to seek, in a foreign land, the means of preventing themselves and their children from starving? And this has been, and now is, actually the case with many such families in this same county of *Sussex*!

100. An *ardent-minded* young man (who, by the bye, will, as I am afraid, have been wearied by this rambling digression) may fear, that this great *sobriety of conduct* in a young woman, for which I have been so strenuously contending, argues a want of that *warmth*, which he naturally so much desires; and, if my observation and experience warranted the entertaining of this fear, I should say, had I to live my life over again, give me the *warmth*, and I will stand my chance as to the rest. But, this observation and this experience tell me the contrary; they tell me that *levity* is, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the companion of a *want of ardent feeling*. Prostitutes never *love*, and, for the far greater part, never did. Their passion, which is more *mere animal* than anything else, is easily gratified; they, like rakes, change not only without pain, but with pleasure; that is to say, pleasure as great as they can enjoy. Women of *light minds* have seldom any *ardent* passion; love is a mere name, unless confined to one object; and young women, in whom *levity of conduct* is observable, will not be thus restricted. I do not, however, recommend a young man to be *too severe* in judging, where the conduct does not go beyond *mere levity*, and is not bordering on *loose conduct*; for something depends here upon constitution and animal spirits, and something also upon the manners of the country. That *levity*, which, in a French girl, I should not have thought a great deal of, would have frightened me away from an English or an American girl. When I was in France, just after I was married, there happened to be amongst our acquaintance a gay, sprightly girl, of about seventeen. I was remonstrat-

ing with her, one day, on the facility with which she seemed to shift her smiles from object to object; and she, stretching one arm out in an upward direction, the other in a downward direction, raising herself upon one foot, leaning her body on one side, and thus throwing herself into a *flying* attitude, answered my grave lecture by singing, in a very sweet voice (significantly bowing her head and smiling at the same time), the following lines from the vaudeville, in the play of *Fi-garo*:

Si l'amour a des aîlles;  
N'est ce pas pour *voltiger*?

That is, if love has *wings*, is it not to *flutter* about with? The wit, argument, and manner, all together, silenced me. She, after I left France, married a very worthy man, has had a large family, and has been, and is, a most excellent wife and mother. But that which does sometimes well in France, does not do here at all. Our manners are more grave: steadiness is the rule, and levity the exception. Love may *voltige* in France; but, in England, it cannot, with safety to the lover: and it is a truth which, I believe, no man of attentive observation will deny, that, as, in general, English wives are *more warm* in their conjugal attachments than those of France, so, with regard to individuals, that those English women who are the *most light* in their manners, and who are the *least constant* in their attachments, have the smallest portion of that *warmth*, that indescribable passion which God has given to human beings as the great counterbalance to all the sorrows and sufferings of life.

## V. TO A FATHER

246. SHAKESPEARE, who is cried up as the great interpreter of the human heart, has said, that the man in whose soul there is no *music*, or love of music, is "fit for murders, treasons, stratagems, and spoils." "Our

*immortal* bard," as the profligate *Sheridan* used to call him in public, while he laughed at him in private; our "*immortal* bard" seems to have forgotten that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were flung into the fiery furnace (made seven times hotter than usual) amidst the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music; he seems to have forgotten that it was a music and a dance-loving damsel that chose, as a recompense for her elegant performance, the bloody head of John the Baptist, brought to her in a charger; he seems to have forgotten that, while Rome burned,

15 Nero fiddled: he did not know, perhaps, that cannibals always dance and sing while their victims are roasting; but he might have known, and he must have known, that England's greatest tyrant, Henry VIII, had, as his agent in blood, Thomas Cromwell, expressed it, "*his sweet soul* enwrapped in the *celestial* sounds of music"; and this was just at the time when the ferocious tyrant was ordering Catholics and Protestants to be tied back to back on the same hurdle, dragged to Smithfield on that hurdle, and there tied to, and burned from, the same stake. Shakespeare must have known these things, for he lived immediately after their date; and if he had lived in our day, he would have seen instances enough of "*sweet souls*" enwrapped in the same manner, and capable, if not of deeds equally bloody, of others, discovering a total want of feeling for sufferings not unfrequently occasioned by their own wanton waste, and waste arising, too, in part, from their taste for these "*celestial sounds*."

247. O no! the heart of man is not to be known by this test: a *great* fondness for music 40 is a mark of great weakness, great vacuity of mind: not of hardness of heart; not of vice; not of downright folly; but of a want of capacity, or inclination, for sober thought. This is not always the case: accidental circumstances almost force the taste upon people: but, generally speaking, it is a preference of sound to sense. \* \* \*



## GEORGE NOEL GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788-1824)

One with Byron's ancestry could scarcely have escaped a passionate temperament and a turbulent life, and Byron had both. His father, John Byron, was a "dazzlingly handsome and very dissipated guardsman" who came of a family many members of which had led wild lives. In his younger days he had eloped with and later married the Marchioness of Carmarthen, and on her death, shortly after the birth of their daughter Augusta, he had returned to England, badly in debt and avowedly on the lookout for a "Golden Dolly," to use Byron's phrase. He found her in the person of Catherine Gordon of Gight, whom he married in 1784 and then impoverished in the course of paying off his accumulated debts. She was a Scotch girl, not without intelligence, but provincial, capricious, and violent-tempered. "She is very amiable at a distance," her husband later wrote to his sister, "but I defy you and all the Apostles to live with her two months, for if anybody could live with her, it was me." To such parents Byron was born, in London, on 22 January, 1788. A little over three years later his father died in France, at the age of thirty-six, and Byron was left to be brought up solely by his mother. The two lived in Aberdeen until Byron was ten years old, the boy getting the beginnings of an education there, suffering from the ministrations of a shockingly bad nurse, and witnessing many a scene of violence caused by his mother's temper. In 1798 he became Lord Byron, on the death of his grand-uncle at Newstead Abbey. He immediately became worried because he could discern no change in his appearance now that he was a lord, and he long remained too conscious of and too proud of his title. The estate which came to him with his peerage was in bad condition and, though it yielded much more money than his mother had had even before her marriage, Byron was seldom free from financial difficulties, which were sometimes acute.

In the summer of 1798 Byron and his mother traveled south to Nottingham, and there and in the following year at London ineffectual efforts were made to cure the boy of the lameness with which he had been born. Byron, one is tempted to say, made the most of this lameness. Probably at times his pride did suffer from it, but he never let others forget it, and he apparently grew conscious that it added to the romantic interest of his otherwise strikingly handsome figure. From 1801 to 1805 Byron was at Harrow, whence he proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge. There his career was, if not spectacular on a large scale,

at least not without excitements and the beginnings of dissipation, love, and poetry. A volume of his poems (*Fugitive Pieces*) was privately printed in 1806, but all save two copies were destroyed by the author because one of the poems was harshly criticized for its viciousness. *Hours of Idleness* was published in 1807, and was seized on for castigation by the *Edinburgh Review*. This review is chiefly notable because it aroused Byron's anger and led him to retaliate in an effective and immediately successful satire, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809). Meanwhile Byron had left Cambridge in the summer of 1808 with an M. A. and had taken up residence at Newstead Abbey, which became the scene of events doubtless wild enough, though probably not so wild as rumor, and on occasion Byron himself, intimated. In the spring of 1809 he took his seat in the House of Lords, and later in the same year he left England for his Albanian tour, which lasted until 1811. On 3 May, 1810, he swam the Hellespont in one hour and ten minutes, an event which he is said never afterwards to have allowed his friends to forget.

In 1812, the year after his return to England, Byron published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and immediately found himself famous. Romantic interest in both the man and his poem became intense, and Byron was the social sensation of London. Sir Walter Scott had been finding the English public ready for the romantic tale in verse, and Byron now proceeded to outdo Scott—or at least for the time being to make him seem tame and spiritless by comparison—in what he had made his own field. With a rapid succession of exciting oriental tales (*The Giaour*, 1813; *The Bride of Abydos*, 1813; *The Corsair*, 1814; *Lara*, 1814) he kept up or even increased the interest which *Childe Harold* had aroused. He was beginning to achieve a more than British, a European renown when, at the height of his dazzling fame, he married Miss Anna Isabella Milbanke in January, 1815. In the following December a child, Augusta Ada, was born, and a little over a month afterwards Lady Byron left her husband, never to return. The marriage had proved a miserable failure. It is doubtful if any woman could have retained Byron's wholehearted allegiance for long; certainly at any rate none did. He could not do without women nor with them, and in this he was at least true to the attitude he took towards the whole life of the world in which he found himself. Moreover, Lady Byron's nature was of an unlikely sort to touch

his feelings, while he was almost from the first extraordinarily brutal in his behavior towards her. She had, indeed, from many of his actions, come to doubt his sanity. Immediately after the separation ugly rumors about its crowning cause began to spread through society, and Byron suddenly found himself ostracized and reviled by the world—a world, he felt, at least no better than he was—which had recently paid lavish homage to him as its brightest star. Towards the end of April, 1816, he left England, to spend the remainder of his life on the Continent.

Byron went first to Geneva, where he spent some months and met Shelley for the first time. Each made a great impression on the other, and their intercourse then, and later in Italy, was important for both of them. During this summer Byron took up *Childe Harold* again, and wrote the third canto. He also wrote *The Prisoner of Chillon* at this time and began *Manfred*. In the fall of 1816 he went down into Italy and settled at Venice. There he finished *Manfred*, wrote *The Lament of Tasso* (both 1817), *Beppo*, and the fourth canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (both 1818). In 1819 he moved to Ravenna in order to be near the Countess Guiccioli, a young Italian girl with an aged husband. The latter at times gave Byron uncomfortable moments, but in the end proved dangerous to his pocketbook rather than to his person. In the same year the opening cantos of *Don Juan*, Byron's greatest poem, were published, further portions of which continued to appear until 1824. In following years Byron wrote a number of dramatic poems—*Cain*, *Sar-*

*danapolis*, and *The Two Foscari* were published in 1821—and his satire, *The Vision of Judgment* (1822). At the same time he was getting restless in Italy. He had been interested in the cause of Italian freedom, but his interest now began to ebb with the failure of some enterprises which he had tried to assist, and his interest in the Guiccioli was also ebbing. He had some thoughts of going to "Bolívar's country," but finally decided to aid the Greeks in their fight against the Turks for independence. He sailed from Genoa in July, 1823, and proceeded to devote both his time and his money to the Greek cause, despite discouragement, hardships, and increasing illness. Finally he succumbed to a fever at Missolonghi, and died there on 19 April, 1824. Nothing, it has been said, so well became his life as the manner of its ending, and the man died, as he had lived and written, "in a way that stirred the feeling and fired the imagination of Europe."

Byron in a sense courted rivalry with Napoleon in the romantic age when giants walked the earth, and he holds the stage securely still. Not pre-eminently a lyric poet in an age of great lyrics, he yet had a largeness and force which give weight to his disillusioned re-action from the European society and politics of his day, and keep alive the poems in which he voiced it. "You have so many 'divine' poems," exclaimed Byron to his publisher, "is it nothing to have written a *human* one?" And while other poets were among the clouds, or at least among the mountains, Byron kept his station in the world and wrote, in *Don Juan*, the great epic of modern life.

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE<sup>1</sup>

### CANTO III.

*Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose; il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps.<sup>2</sup>*

Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.

I

IS THY face like thy mother's, my fair child!  
ADA! sole daughter of my house and heart!<sup>3</sup>  
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they  
smiled,  
And then we parted,—not as now we part,

<sup>1</sup>The first two cantos of *Childe Harold* were published in 1812. They tell of the travels of a disillusioned young man through Portugal, Spain, Albania, and Greece—what he saw and what he felt. Byron did not at the time continue the poem, but took it up again after his final departure from England in the spring of 1816. Canto III was written in Switzerland in May and June, 1816, and was published the same year. Substantially the third and fourth cantos form a distinct poem. An external connection with the earlier cantos

But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start, 5  
The waters heave around me; and on high  
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,  
Whither I know not, but the hour's gone by,  
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve  
or glad mine eye.

2

Once more upon the waters! yet once  
more! 10  
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed  
That knows his rider. Welcome to their  
roar!  
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!

is maintained, but in the intervening years Byron had experienced much and suffered much, and in these later cantos he speaks almost without disguise in his own person. The present canto tells of Byron's journey through Belgium and up the Rhine into Switzerland, description being mingled with reflective passages inspired by the scenes through which he passed.

<sup>2</sup>So that this employment may force you to think of something else; there is in truth no remedy save that and time.

<sup>3</sup>Byron never saw his daughter after she was five weeks old.

Though the strained mast should quiver as  
a reed,  
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the  
gale, 15  
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,  
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to  
sail  
Where'er the surge may sweep, the temp-  
est's breath prevail.

## 3

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,<sup>1</sup>  
The wandering outlaw of his own dark  
mind; 20  
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,  
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind  
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I  
find  
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up  
tears, 24  
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,  
O'er which all heavily the journeying years  
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a  
flower appears.

## 4

Since my young days of passion—joy, or  
pain,  
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a  
string,  
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain 30  
I would essay as I have sung to sing.  
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling,  
So that it wean me from the weary dream  
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling  
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem 35  
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful  
theme.

## 5

He, who grown agéd in this world of woe,  
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of  
life, 38  
So that no wonder waits him; nor below  
Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,  
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife  
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell  
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves,  
yet rife  
With airy images, and shapes which dwell  
Still unimpaired, though old, in the soul's  
haunted cell. 45

## 6

'Tis to create, and in creating live  
A being more intense that we endow  
With form our fancy, gaining as we give  
The life we image, even as I do now.

<sup>1</sup>I. e., Childe Harold.

What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou,  
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse  
earth, 51  
Invisible but gazing, as I glow  
Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy  
birth,  
And feeling still with thee in my crushed  
feelings' dearth.

## 7

Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have*  
thought 55  
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,  
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,  
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:  
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to  
tame,  
My springs of life were poisoned. 'Tis  
too late! 60  
Yet am I changed; though still enough the  
same  
In strength to bear what time cannot abate,  
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing  
Fate.

## 8

Something too much of this:—but now  
'tis past,  
And the spell closes with its silent seal. 65  
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;  
He of the breast which fain no more would  
feel,  
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but  
ne'er heal;  
Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him  
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal 70  
Fire from the mind as vigor from the limb;  
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near  
the brim.

## 9

His had been quaffed too quickly, and he  
found  
The dregs were wormwood; but he filled  
again,  
And from a purer fount, on holier ground, 75  
And deemed its spring perpetual; but in  
vain!  
Still round him clung invisibly a chain  
Which galled for ever, fettering though un-  
seen,  
And heavy though it clanked not; worn  
with pain,  
Which pined although it spoke not, and  
grew keen, 80  
Entering with every step he took through  
many a scene.



10

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mixed  
Again in fancied safety with his kind,  
And deemed his spirit now so firmly fixed  
And sheathed with an invulnerable mind, 85  
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurked behind;  
And he, as one, might 'midst the many  
stand  
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to  
find  
Fit speculation; such as in strange land  
He found in wonder-works of God and Na-  
ture's hand. 90

11

But who can view the ripened rose, nor seek  
To wear it? who can curiously behold  
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's  
cheek,  
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?  
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds  
unfold 95  
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor  
climb?  
Harold, once more within the vortex, rolled  
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,  
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's  
fond prime.

12

But soon he knew himself the most unfit 100  
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he  
held  
Little in common; untaught to submit  
His thoughts to others, though his soul was  
quelled  
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncom-  
pelled, 104  
He would not yield dominion of his mind  
To spirits against whom his own rebelled;  
Proud though in desolation; which could  
find  
A life within itself, to breathe without man-  
kind.

13

Where rose the mountains, there to him  
were friends,  
Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his  
home, 110  
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, ex-  
tends,  
He had the passion and the power to roam;  
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,  
Were unto him companionship; they spake  
A mutual language, clearer than the tone  
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft  
forsake 116  
For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams on  
the lake.

14

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,  
Till he had peopled them with beings  
bright  
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-  
born jars, 120  
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:  
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight  
He had been happy; but this clay will sink  
Its spark immortal, envying it the light  
To which it mounts, as if to break the link  
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos  
us to its brink. 126

15

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing  
Restless and worn, and stern and wear-  
some,  
Dropped as a wild-born falcon with clipped  
wing,  
To whom the boundless air alone were  
home: 130  
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,  
As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat  
His breast and beak against his wiry dome  
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat  
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom  
eat. 135

16

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,  
With nought of hope left, but with less of  
gloom,  
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,  
That all was over on this side the tomb,  
Had made Despair a smilingness assume, 140  
Which, though 'twere wild,—as on the  
plundered wreck  
When mariners would madly meet their  
doom  
With draughts intemperate on the sinking  
deck,—  
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to  
check.

17

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's  
dust! 145  
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchered be-  
low!  
Is the spot marked with no colossal bust?  
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?  
None; but *the moral's truth* tells simpler so.  
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—  
How that red rain hath made the harvest  
grow! 151  
And is this all the world has gained by  
thee,  
Thou first and last of fields! king-making  
Victory?

18

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,  
 The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!  
 How in an hour the power which gave annals<sup>156</sup>  
 Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!  
 In "pride of place" here last the eagle<sup>1</sup>  
 flew,  
 Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,  
 Pierced by the shaft of banded nations  
 through;<sup>160</sup>  
 Ambition's life and labors all were vain;  
 He wears the shattered links of the world's  
 broken chain.

19

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit  
 And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more  
 free?  
 Did nations combat to make *One* submit;  
 Or league to teach all kings true sover-  
 eignty?<sup>166</sup>  
 What! shall reviving Thralldom again be  
 The patched-up idol of enlightened days?  
 Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall  
 we  
 Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly  
 gaze<sup>170</sup>  
 And servile knees to thrones? No; *prove*  
 before ye praise!

20

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!  
 In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot  
 tears  
 For Europe's flowers long rooted up before  
 The trampler of her vineyards; in vain,  
 years<sup>175</sup>  
 Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,  
 Have all been borne, and broken by the  
 accord  
 Of roused-up millions; all that most endears  
 Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword  
 Such as Harmodius<sup>2</sup> drew on Athens' tyrant  
 lord.<sup>180</sup>

21

There was a sound of revelry by night,  
 And Belgium's capital had gathered then  
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and  
 brave men;<sup>184</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Napoleon. "*Pride of place* is a term of falconry, meaning the highest pitch of flight" (Byron's note).

<sup>2</sup>Harmodius and Aristogiton, concealing their swords in branches of myrtle during a religious festival, slew Hipparchus, who with his brother Hippias tyrannically ruled Athens. After their death and the later banishment of Hippias the two were praised as martyred patriots.

A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake  
 again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;  
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a  
 rising knell!

22

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas, but the  
 wind,<sup>190</sup>  
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;  
 On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;  
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and  
 Pleasure meet  
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying  
 feet—  
 But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in  
 once more,<sup>195</sup>  
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!  
 Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening  
 roar!

23

Within a windowed niche of that high hall  
 Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain;<sup>3</sup> he did  
 hear<sup>200</sup>  
 That sound the first amidst the festival,  
 And caught its tone with Death's pro-  
 phetic ear;  
 And when they smiled because he deemed  
 it near,  
 His heart more truly knew that peal too  
 well  
 Which stretched his father on a bloody  
 bier,<sup>205</sup>  
 And roused the vengeance blood alone  
 could quell;  
 He rushed into the field, and, foremost fight-  
 ing, fell.

24

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and  
 fro,  
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of  
 distress,<sup>209</sup>  
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago  
 Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;  
 And there were sudden partings, such as  
 press  
 The life from out young hearts, and chok-  
 ing sighs  
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who could  
 guess  
 If ever more should meet those mutual  
 eyes,<sup>215</sup>  
 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn  
 could rise!

<sup>3</sup>Frederick William, Duke of Brunswick.

25

And there was mounting in hot haste; the  
steed,  
The mustering squadron, and the clatter-  
ing car,  
Went pouring forward with impetuous  
speed,  
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war; 220  
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;  
And near, the beat of the alarming drum  
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;  
While thronged the citizens with terror  
dumb,  
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe!  
they come! they come!" 225

26

And wild and high the "Cameron's gather-  
ing" rose!  
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's  
hills  
Have heard, and heard, too, have her  
Saxon foes:—  
How in the noon of night that pibroch  
thrills,  
Savage and shrill! But with the breath  
which fills 230  
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountain-  
eers  
With the fierce native daring which instills  
The stirring memory of a thousand years,  
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each  
clansman's ears!

27

And Ardennes waves above them her green  
leaves, 235  
Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they  
pass,  
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,  
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!  
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass  
Which now beneath them, but above shall  
grow 240  
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass  
Of living valor, rolling on the foe  
And burning with high hope shall molder  
cold and low.

28

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,  
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, 245  
The midnight brought the signal-sound of  
strife,  
The morn the marshaling in arms,—the  
day

<sup>1</sup>The gathering-cry of the clan Cameron. The chief of the clan was called Lochiel because this was the name of his estate.

Battle's magnificently stern array!  
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which  
when rent 249  
The earth is covered thick with other clay,  
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped  
and pent,  
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red  
burial blent!

29

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps  
than mine:  
Yet one I would select from that proud  
throng, 254  
Partly because they blend me with his line,  
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,  
And partly that bright names will hallow  
song;  
And his was of the bravest, and when  
showered  
The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files  
along,  
Even where the thickest of war's tempest  
lowered, 260  
They reached no nobler breast than thine,  
young gallant Howard!<sup>2</sup>

30

There have been tears and breaking hearts  
for thee,  
And mine were nothing had I such to give;  
But when I stood beneath the fresh green  
tree,  
Which living waves where thou didst cease  
to live, 265  
And saw around me the wide field revive  
With fruits and fertile promise, and the  
Spring  
Came forth her work of gladness to contrive,  
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,  
I turned from all she brought to those she  
could not bring. 270

31

I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom  
each  
And one as all a ghastly gap did make  
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach  
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;  
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must  
awake 275  
Those whom they thirst for; though the  
sound of Fame  
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake  
The fever of vain longing, and the name  
So honored but assumes a stronger, bitterer  
claim.

<sup>2</sup>Major Frederick Howard, Byron's second cousin. His father, the Earl of Carlisle, was Byron's guardian. Byron had given a satirical sketch of him in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.



32

They mourn, but smile at length; and,  
 smiling, mourn; <sup>280</sup>  
 The tree will wither long before it fall;  
 The hull drives on, though mast and sail  
 be torn;  
 The roof-tree sinks, but molders on the hall  
 In massy hoariness; the ruined wall  
 Stands when its wind-worn battlements are  
 gone; <sup>285</sup>  
 The bars survive the captive they enthrall;  
 The day drags through, though storms  
 keep out the sun;  
 And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly  
 live on:

33

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass  
 In every fragment multiplies; and makes  
 A thousand images of one that was, <sup>291</sup>  
 The same, and still the more, the more it  
 breaks;  
 And thus the heart will do which not for-  
 sakes,  
 Living in shattered guise; and still, and cold,  
 And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow  
 aches, <sup>295</sup>  
 Yet withers on till all without is old,  
 Showing no visible sign, for such things are  
 untold.

34

There is a very life in our despair,  
 Vitality of poison,—a quick root  
 Which feeds these deadly branches; for it  
 were <sup>300</sup>  
 As nothing did we die; but Life will suit  
 Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,  
 Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,  
 All ashes to the taste: Did man compute  
 Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er <sup>305</sup>  
 Such hours 'gainst years of life,—say, would  
 he name threescore?

35

The Psalmist numbered out the years of  
 man:  
 They are enough; and if thy tale be *true*,  
 Thou, who didst grudge him even that  
 fleeting span,  
 More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo! <sup>310</sup>  
 Millions of tongues record thee, and anew  
 Their children's lips shall echo them, and  
 say—  
 "Here, where the sword united nations  
 drew,  
 Our countrymen were warring on that  
 day!"  
 And this is much—and all—which will not  
 pass away. <sup>315</sup>

36

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of  
 men,<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose spirit, antithetically mixed,  
 One moment of the mightiest, and again  
 On little objects with like firmness fixed;  
 Extreme in all things! hadst thou been  
 betwixt, <sup>320</sup>  
 Thy throne had still been thine, or never  
 been;  
 For daring made thy rise as fall: thou  
 seek'st  
 Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,  
 And shake again the world, the Thunderer  
 of the scene!

37

Conqueror and captive of the earth art  
 thou! <sup>325</sup>  
 She trembles at thee still, and thy wild  
 name  
 Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds  
 than now  
 That thou art nothing, save the jest of  
 Fame,  
 Who wooed thee once, thy vassal, and be-  
 came  
 The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert  
 A god unto thyself; nor less the same <sup>331</sup>  
 To the astounded kingdoms all inert,  
 Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou  
 didst assert.

38

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,  
 Battling with nations, flying from the field;  
 Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-  
 stool, now <sup>336</sup>  
 More than thy meanest soldier taught to  
 yield;  
 An empire thou couldst crush, command,  
 rebuild,  
 But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,  
 However deeply in men's spirits skilled, <sup>340</sup>  
 Look through thine own, nor curb the lust  
 of war,  
 Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the  
 loftiest star.

39

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning  
 tide  
 With that untaught innate philosophy,  
 Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep  
 pride, <sup>345</sup>  
 Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.

<sup>1</sup>Napoleon.

When the whole host of hatred stood hard  
by,  
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou  
hast smiled  
With a sedate and all-enduring eye;—  
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favorite  
child, 350  
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him  
piled.

40

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them  
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show  
That just habitual scorn, which could con-  
temn  
Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel,  
not so 355  
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,  
And spurn the instruments thou wert to  
use  
Till they were turned unto thine overthrow:  
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;  
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot  
who choose. 360

41

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,  
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall  
alone,  
Such scorn of man had helped to brave the  
shock;  
But men's thoughts were the steps which  
paved thy throne,  
Their admiration thy best weapon shone; 365  
The part of Philip's son<sup>1</sup> was thine, not then  
(Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)  
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;  
For sceptered cynics earth were far too wide  
a den.

42

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell, 370  
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire  
And motion of the soul which will not  
dwell  
In its own narrow being, but aspire  
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;  
And, but once kindled, quenchless ever-  
more, 375  
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire  
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,  
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

43

This makes the madmen who have made  
men mad 379  
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings,  
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add  
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet  
things

Which stir too strongly the soul's secret  
springs,  
And are themselves the fools to those they  
fool; 384  
Envi'd, yet how unenviable! what stings  
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a  
school  
Which would unteach mankind the lust to  
shine or rule:

44

Their breath is agitation, and their life  
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,  
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife, 390  
That should their days, surviving perils  
past,  
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast  
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;  
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste  
With its own flickering, or a sword laid  
by, 395  
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

45

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find  
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds  
and snow;  
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,  
Must look down on the hate of those be-  
low. 400  
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,  
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,  
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow  
Contending tempests on his naked head,  
And thus reward the toils which to those  
summits led. 405

46

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will  
be  
Within its own creation, or in thine,  
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,  
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?  
There Harold gazes on a work divine, 410  
A blending of all beauties; streams and dells,  
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, moun-  
tain, vine,  
And chiefless castles breathing stern fare-  
wells  
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin  
greenly dwells.

47

And there they stand, as stands a lofty  
mind, 415  
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,  
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,  
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.

<sup>1</sup>Alexander the Great.

There was a day when they were young  
and proud;  
Banners on high, and battles passed below;  
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud;  
And those which waved are shredless dust  
ere now,  
And the bleak battlements shall bear no fu-  
ture blow.

48

Beneath these battlements, within those  
walls,  
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud  
state  
Each robber chief upheld his arméd halls,  
Doing his evil will, nor less elate  
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.  
What want these outlaws conquerors  
should have  
But history's purchased page to call them  
great?  
A wider space, an ornamented grave?  
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls  
were full as brave.

49

In their baronial feuds and single fields,  
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!  
And Love, which lent a blazon to their  
shields,  
With emblems well devised by amorous  
pride,  
Through all the mail of iron hearts would  
glide;  
But still their flame was fierceness, and  
drew on  
Keen contest and destruction near allied,  
And many a tower for some fair mischief  
won,  
Saw the discolored Rhine beneath its ruin run.

50

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!  
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow  
Through banks whose beauty would endure  
for ever  
Could man but leave thy bright creation  
so,  
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow  
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to  
see  
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know  
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem  
such to me,  
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it  
should Lethe<sup>1</sup> be.

450

<sup>1</sup>The river of forgetfulness. Were it Lethe Byron could drink of it and forget the past, his own included.

51

A thousand battles have assailed thy banks,  
But these and half their fame have passed  
away,  
And Slaughter heaped on high his weltering  
ranks;  
Their very graves are gone, and what are  
they?  
Thy tide washed down the blood of yester-  
day,  
And all was stainless, and on thy clear  
stream  
Glassed, with its dancing light, the sunny  
ray;  
But o'er the blackened memory's blighting  
dream  
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping  
as they seem.

52

Thus Harold inly said, and passed along,  
Yet not insensible to all which here  
Awoke the jocund birds to early song  
In glens which might have made even exile  
dear:  
Though on his brow were graven lines aus-  
tere,  
And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en  
the place  
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,  
Joy was not always absent from his face,  
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with  
transient trace.

53

Nor was all love shut from him, though his  
days  
Of passion had consumed themselves to  
dust.  
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze  
On such as smile upon us; the heart must  
Leap kindly back to kindness, though dis-  
gust  
Hath weaned it from all worldlings: thus  
he felt,  
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet  
trust  
In one fond breast,<sup>2</sup> to which his own would  
melt,  
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom  
dwelt.

54

And he had learned to love,—I know not  
why,  
For this in such as him seems strange of  
mood,—  
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,  
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,

<sup>2</sup>In that of Byron's half-sister Augusta.



To change like this, a mind so far imbued  
 With scorn of man, it little boots to know,  
 But thus it was; and though in solitude  
 Small power the nipped affections have to  
 grow, <sup>485</sup>  
 In him this glowed when all beside had  
 ceased to glow.

55

And there was one soft breast, as hath been  
 said,  
 Which unto his was bound by stronger ties  
 Than the church links withal; and, though  
 unwed, <sup>489</sup>  
*That* love was pure, and, far above disguise,  
 Had stood the test of mortal enmities  
 Still undivided, and cemented more  
 By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;  
 But this was firm, and from a foreign shore  
 Well to that heart might his these absent  
 greetings pour! <sup>495</sup>

I

The castled crag of Drachenfels<sup>1</sup>  
 Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,  
 Whose breast of waters broadly swells  
 Between the banks which bear the vine,  
 And hills all rich with blossomed trees, <sup>500</sup>  
 And fields which promise corn and wine,  
 And scattered cities crowning these,  
 Whose far white walls along them shine,  
 Have strewed a scene, which I should see  
 With double joy wert *thou* with me. <sup>505</sup>

II

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,  
 And hands which offer early flowers,  
 Walk smiling o'er this paradise;  
 Above, the frequent feudal towers  
 Through green leaves lift their walls of  
 gray; <sup>510</sup>  
 And many a rock which steeply lowers,  
 And noble arch in proud decay,  
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;  
 But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—  
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine! <sup>515</sup>

III

I send the lilies given to me;  
 Though long before thy hand they touch,  
 I know that they must withered be,  
 But yet reject them not as such;  
 For I have cherished them as dear, <sup>520</sup>  
 Because they yet may meet thine eye,

And guide thy soul to mine even here,  
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,  
 And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,  
 And offered from my heart to thine! <sup>525</sup>

IV

The river nobly foams and flows,  
 The charm of this enchanted ground,  
 And all its thousand turns disclose  
 Some fresher beauty's varying round: <sup>529</sup>  
 The haughtiest breast its wish might bound  
 Through life to dwell delighted here;  
 Nor could on earth a spot be found  
 To nature and to me so dear,  
 Could thy dear eyes in following mine <sup>534</sup>  
 Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

56

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground,  
 There is a small and simple pyramid,  
 Crowning the summit of the verdant  
 mound;  
 Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,  
 Our enemy's—but let not that forbid <sup>540</sup>  
 Honor to Marceau!<sup>2</sup> o'er whose early tomb  
 Tears, big tears, gushed from the rough  
 soldier's lid,  
 Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,  
 Falling for France, whose rights he battled  
 to resume.

57

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young  
 career,— <sup>545</sup>  
 His mourners were two hosts, his friends  
 and foes;  
 And fitly may the stranger lingering here  
 Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;  
 For he was Freedom's champion, one of  
 those,  
 The few in number, who had not o'er-  
 stepped <sup>550</sup>  
 The charter to chastise which she bestows  
 On such as wield her weapons; he had kept  
 The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er  
 him wept.

58

Here Ehrenbreitstein,<sup>3</sup> with her shattered  
 wall  
 Black with the miner's blast, upon her  
 height <sup>555</sup>  
 Yet shows of what she was, when shell and  
 ball  
 Rebounding idly on her strength did light:

<sup>1</sup>Dragon Rock. One of the Siebengebirge (Seven Moun-  
 tains) on the right bank of the Rhine between Remagen and  
 Bonn.

<sup>2</sup>Soldier of revolutionary France who fell in battle in 1796,  
 at the age of twenty-seven.

<sup>3</sup>A fortress on the Rhine opposite the mouth of the Moselle.  
 The French captured it in 1799 and later destroyed it.

A tower of victory! from whence the flight  
Of baffled foes was watched along the plain:  
But Peace destroyed what War could never  
blight, 560  
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain—  
On which the iron shower for years had  
poured in vain.

## 59

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long de-  
lighted  
The stranger fain would linger on his way!  
Thine is a scene alike where souls united 565  
Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;  
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to  
prey  
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,  
Where Nature, nor too somber nor too  
gay, 569  
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,  
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

## 60

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!  
There can be no farewell to scene like thine;  
The mind is colored by thy every hue;  
And if reluctantly the eyes resign 575  
Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely  
Rhine!  
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting  
praise;  
More mighty spots may rise, more glaring  
shine,  
But none unite in one attaching maze  
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of  
old days. 580

## 61

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom  
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,  
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,  
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls be-  
tween,  
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets  
been, 585  
In mockery of man's art; and these withal  
A race of faces happy as the scene,  
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,  
Still springing o'er thy banks, though Em-  
pires near them fall. 589

## 62

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,  
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls  
Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy scalps,  
And throned Eternity in icy halls 593

Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls  
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!  
All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,  
Gather around these summits, as to show  
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave  
vain man below.

## 63

But ere these matchless heights I dare to  
scan,  
There is a spot should not be passed in  
vain, 600  
Morat!<sup>1</sup> the proud, the patriot field! where  
man  
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,  
Nor blush for those who conquered on that  
plain;  
Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless  
host,  
A bony heap, through ages to remain, 605  
Themselves their monument;—the Stygian  
coast  
Unsepulchered they roamed, and shrieked  
each wandering ghost.

## 64

While Waterloo with Cannæ's<sup>2</sup> carnage vies,  
Morat and Marathon twin names shall  
stand; 609  
They were true Glory's stainless victories,  
Won by the unambitious heart and hand  
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,  
All unbought champions in no princely  
cause  
Of vice-entailed Corruption; they no land  
Doomed to bewail the blasphemy of laws  
Making kings' rights divine, by some Dra-  
conic<sup>3</sup> clause. 616

## 65

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears  
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;  
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,  
And looks as with the wild-bewildered gaze  
Of one to stone converted by amaze, 621  
Yet still with consciousness; and there it  
stands  
Making a marvel that it not decays,  
When the coeval pride of human hands,  
Leveled Adventicum,<sup>4</sup> hath strewed her sub-  
ject lands. 625

<sup>1</sup>Name of a town and lake east of Neuchâtel; the scene of a Swiss victory over Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, in 1476.

<sup>2</sup>Scene of a Roman defeat by Hannibal in the Second Punic War.

<sup>3</sup>Draco was an Athenian, said to have been the first to draw up a code of laws. This code has become proverbial for its severity.

<sup>4</sup>Near Morat, capital of the Roman colony of Helvetia.

66

And there—oh! sweet and sacred be the name!—

Julia!—the daughter, the devoted—gave  
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim

Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.

Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave 630

The life she lived in; but the judge was just,  
And then she died on him she could not save.

Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,  
And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.

67

But these are deeds which should not pass away, 635

And names that must not wither, though the earth

Forgets her empires with a just decay,  
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth;

The high, the mountain-majesty of worth  
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe, 640  
And from its immortality look forth

In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,  
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

68

Lake Leman<sup>2</sup> woos me with its crystal face,  
The mirror where the stars and mountains view 645

The stillness of their aspect in each trace  
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue:

There is too much of man here, to look through

With a fit mind the might which I behold;  
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew 650

Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than of old,

Ere mingling with the herd had penned me in their fold.

69

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind:  
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,

Nor is it discontent to keep the mind 655  
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil

In the hot throng, where we become the spoil

Of our infection, till too late and long  
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,

<sup>1</sup>Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavor to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina (Byron's note).

<sup>2</sup>The Lake of Geneva.

In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong  
Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong. 661

70

There, in a moment we may plunge our years

In fatal penitence, and in the blight  
Of our own soul turn all our blood to tears,

And color things to come with hues of Night; 665

The race of life becomes a hopeless flight  
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea

The boldest steer but where their ports invite;

But there are wanderers o'er Eternity  
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored ne'er shall be. 670

71

Is it not better, then, to be alone,  
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?

By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,  
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,

Which feeds it as a mother who doth make  
A fair but froward infant her own care, 676

Kissing its cries away as these awake;—  
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,

Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to inflict or bear?

72

I live not in myself, but I become 680  
Portion of that around me; and to me

High mountains are a feeling, but the hum  
Of human cities torture: I can see

Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be  
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain, 685

Classed among creatures, when the soul can flee,

And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain

Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

73

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life:  
I look upon the peopled desert past, 690

As on a place of agony and strife,  
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,

To act and suffer, but remount at last  
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,

Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast 695

Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,

Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.



74

And when, at length, the mind shall be all  
free  
From what it hates in this degraded form,  
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be 700  
Existent happier in the fly and worm,—  
When elements to elements conform,  
And dust is as it should be, shall I not  
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?  
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each  
spot? 705  
Of which, even now, I share at times the im-  
mortal lot?

75

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies,  
a part  
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?  
Is not the love of these deep in my heart  
With a pure passion? should I not contemn  
All objects, if compared with these? and  
stem 711  
A tide of suffering, rather than forgo  
Such feelings for the hard and worldly  
phlegm  
Of those whose eyes are only turned below,  
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts  
which dare not glow? 715

76

But this is not my theme; and I return  
To that which is immediate, and require  
Those who find contemplation in the urn,<sup>1</sup>  
To look on One,<sup>2</sup> whose dust was once all  
fire,  
A native of the land where I respire 720  
The clear air for a while—a passing guest,  
Where he became a being,—whose desire  
Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,  
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all  
rest.

77

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rous-  
seau, 725  
The apostle of affliction, he who threw  
Enchantment over passion, and from woe  
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew  
The breath which made him wretched; yet  
he knew  
How to make madness beautiful, and cast  
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly  
hue 731  
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they  
passed  
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly  
and fast.

<sup>1</sup>Which contains the ashes of the dead.

<sup>2</sup>Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). He was born at Geneva and spent his earliest years there.

78

His love was passion's essence:—as a tree  
On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame 735  
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be  
Thus, and enamored, were in him the same.  
But his was not the love of living dame,  
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,  
But of ideal beauty, which became 740  
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems  
Along his burning page, distempered though  
it seems.

79

*This* breathed itself to life in Julie,<sup>3</sup> *this*  
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;  
This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss 745  
Which every morn his fevered lip would  
greet,  
From hers, who but with friendship his  
would meet;<sup>4</sup>  
But to that gentle touch through brain and  
breast  
Flashed the thrilled spirit's love-devouring  
heat;  
In that absorbing sigh perchance more  
bless'd 750  
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek  
possessed.

80

His life was one long war with self-sought  
foes,  
Or friends by him self-banished; for his  
mind  
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and  
chose,  
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind, 755  
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange  
and blind.  
But he was frensied,—wherefore, who may  
know?  
Since cause might be which skill could  
never find;  
But he was frensied by disease or woe,  
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a  
reasoning show. 760

81

For then he was inspired, and from him  
came,  
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,  
Those oracles which set the world in flame,  
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no  
more:

<sup>3</sup>Heroine of Rousseau's novel, *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse*.

<sup>4</sup>This refers to the account in his *Confessions* of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot, and his long walk every morn-  
ing, for the sake of the single kiss which was the common  
salutation of French acquaintance (Byron's note).

Did he not this for France? which lay be-  
fore 765  
Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?  
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,  
Till by the voice of him and his compeers  
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows  
o'ergrown fears?

82

They made themselves a fearful monument!  
The wreck of old opinions—things which  
grew, 771  
Breathed from the birth of time: the veil  
they rent,  
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.  
But good with ill they also overthrew,  
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild 775  
Upon the same foundation, and renew  
Dungeons and thrones, which the same  
hour refilled,  
As heretofore, because ambition was self-  
willed.

83

But this will not endure, nor be endured!  
Mankind have felt their strength, and made  
it felt. 780  
They might have used it better, but, al-  
lured  
By their new vigor, sternly have they dealt  
On one another; pity ceased to melt  
With her once natural charities. But they,  
Who in oppression's darkness caved had  
dwelt, 785  
They were not eagles, nourished with the  
day;  
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook  
their prey?

84

What deep wounds ever closed without a  
scar?  
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to  
wear 789  
That which disfigures it; and they who war  
With their own hopes, and have been van-  
quished, bear  
Silence, but not submission: in his lair  
Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the  
hour  
Which shall atone for years; none need  
despair:  
It came, it cometh, and will come,—the  
power 795  
To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be  
slower.

85

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,  
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing

Which warns me, with its stillness, to for-  
sake 799  
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.  
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing  
To waft me from distraction; once I loved  
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring  
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,  
That I with stern delights should e'er have  
been so moved. 805

86

It is the hush of night, and all between  
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet  
clear,  
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,  
Save darkened Jura, whose capped heights  
appear  
Precipitously steep; and drawing near, 810  
There breathes a living fragrance from the  
shore,  
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the  
ear  
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,  
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol  
more.

87

He is an evening reveler, who makes 815  
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;  
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes  
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.  
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,  
But that is fancy, for the starlight dew 820  
All silently their tears of love instill,  
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse  
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her  
hues.

88

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!  
If in your bright leaves we would read the  
fate 825  
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,  
That in our aspirations to be great,  
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,  
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are  
A beauty and a mystery, and create 830  
In us such love and reverence from afar,  
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named  
themselves a star.

89

All heaven and earth are still—though not  
in sleep,  
But breathless, as we grow when feeling  
most;  
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too  
deep:— 835  
All heaven and earth are still: From the  
high host

Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-coast,  
 All is concentrated in a life intense,  
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,  
 But hath a part of being, and a sense 840  
 Of that which is of all Creator and defense.

90

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt  
 In solitude, where we are *least* alone;  
 A truth, which through our being then doth melt,  
 And purifies from self: it is a tone, 845  
 The soul and source of music, which makes known  
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm  
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,<sup>1</sup>  
 Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm  
 The specter Death, had he substantial power  
 to harm. 850

91

Not vainly did the early Persian make  
 His altar the high places, and the peak  
 Of earth-*o*rgazing mountains, and thus take  
 A fit and unvalled temple, there to seek  
 The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,  
 Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare 856  
 Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,  
 With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,  
 Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r!

92

The sky is changed!—and such a change!  
 Oh night, 860  
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light  
 Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,  
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among  
 Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud, 865  
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,  
 And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,  
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

93

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!  
 Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be

A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
 A portion of the tempest and of thee!  
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!

And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee 875

Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,  
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

94

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between  
 Heights which appear as lovers who have parted 879  
 In hate, whose mining depths so intervene  
 That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;  
 Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,  
 Love was the very root of the fond rage  
 Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:  
 Itself expired, but leaving them an age 885  
 Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

95

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,  
 The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:  
 For here, not one, but many, make their play,  
 And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand, 890  
 Flashing and cast around; of all the band,  
 The brightest through these parted hills hath forked  
 His lightnings,—as if he did understand,  
 That in such gaps as desolation worked,  
 There the hot shaft should blast whatever  
 therein lurked. 895

96

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!  
 With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul  
 To make these felt and feeling, well may be  
 Things that have made me watchful; the far roll  
 Of your departing voices, is the knoll<sup>2</sup> 900  
 Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.  
 But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?  
 Are ye like those within the human breast?  
 Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

<sup>1</sup>Aphrodite's girdle, which attracted love to its wearer.

<sup>2</sup>Knell.



97

Could I embody and unbosom now<sup>905</sup>  
That which is most within me,—could I  
wreak  
My thoughts upon expression, and thus  
throw  
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong  
or weak,  
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,  
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into  
*one word*,<sup>910</sup>  
And that one word were Lightning, I  
would speak;  
But as it is, I live and die unheard,  
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it  
as a sword.

98

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,  
With breath all incense, and with cheek all  
bloom,<sup>915</sup>  
Laughing the clouds away with playful  
scorn,  
And living as if earth contained no tomb,—  
And glowing into day: we may resume  
The march of our existence: and thus I,  
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find  
room<sup>920</sup>  
And food for meditation, nor pass by  
Much, that may give us pause, if pondered  
fittingly.

99

Clarens!<sup>1</sup> sweet Clarens, birthplace of deep  
Love!  
Thine air is the young breath of passionate  
thought;  
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows  
above<sup>925</sup>  
The very Glaciers have his colors caught,  
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them  
wrought  
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the  
rocks,  
The permanent crags, tell here of Love,  
who sought<sup>929</sup>  
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,  
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that  
woos, then mocks.

100

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are  
trod,—  
Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne  
To which the steps are mountains; where  
the god  
Is a pervading life and light,—so shown<sup>935</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Village on the Lake of Geneva, the scene of meetings of the  
lovers in Rousseau's *Julie*.

Not on those summits solely, nor alone  
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower  
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath  
blown,  
His soft and summer breath, whose tender  
power  
Passes the strength of storms in their most  
desolate hour.<sup>940</sup>

101

All things are here of *him*; from the black  
pines,  
Which are his shade on high, and the loud  
roar  
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines  
Which slope his green path downward to  
the shore,  
Where the bowed waters meet him, and  
adore,<sup>945</sup>  
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,  
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,  
But light leaves, young as joy, stands  
where it stood,  
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

102

A populous solitude of bees and birds<sup>950</sup>  
And fairy-formed and many-colored things,  
Who worship him with notes more sweet  
than words,  
And innocently open their glad wings,  
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,  
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend  
Of stirring branches, and the bud which  
brings<sup>956</sup>  
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,  
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty  
end.

103

He who hath loved not, here would learn  
that lore,<sup>959</sup>  
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows  
That tender mystery, will love the more;  
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's  
woes,  
And the world's waste, have driven him far  
from those,  
For 'tis his nature to advance or die;<sup>964</sup>  
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows  
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie  
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

104

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this  
spot,  
Peopling it with affections; but he found  
It was the scene which Passion must allot  
To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the  
ground<sup>971</sup>

Where early Love his Psyche's zone un-  
bound,  
And hallowed it with loveliness: 'tis lone,  
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a  
sound,  
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the  
Rhône 975  
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have  
reared a throne.

105

Lausanne! and Ferney!<sup>1</sup> ye have been the  
abodes  
Of names which unto you bequeathed a  
name;  
Mortals, who sought and found, by danger-  
ous roads,  
A path to perpetuity of fame: 980  
They were gigantic minds, and their steep  
aim  
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile  
Thoughts which should call down thunder,  
and the flame  
Of Heaven again assailed, if Heaven the  
while  
On man and man's research could deign do  
more than smile. 985

106

The one<sup>2</sup> was fire and fickleness, a child  
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind  
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or  
wild,—  
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;  
He multiplied himself among mankind, 990  
The Proteus of their talents: But his own  
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the  
wind,  
Blew where it listed, laying all things  
prone,—  
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake  
a throne.

107

The other, deep and slow, exhausting  
thought, 995  
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,  
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,  
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,  
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;  
The lord of irony,—that master-spell, 1000  
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew  
from fear,  
And doomed him to the zealot's ready Hell,  
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently  
well.

108

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by  
them,  
If merited, the penalty is paid; 1005  
It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn;  
The hour must come when such things shall  
be made  
Known unto all, or hope and dread allayed  
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,  
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie  
decayed, 1010  
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,  
'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

109

But let me quit man's works, again to read  
His Maker's, spread around me, and sus-  
pend 1014  
This page, which from my reveries I feed,  
Until it seems prolonging without end.  
The clouds above me to the white Alps  
tend,  
And I must pierce them, and survey what-  
e'er  
May be permitted, as my steps I bend  
To their most great and growing region,  
where 1020  
The earth to her embrace compels the powers  
of air.

110

Italia, too! Italia! looking on thee,  
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,  
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won  
thee,  
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages 1025  
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;  
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires;  
still,  
The fount at which the panting mind as-  
suages  
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her  
fill,  
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's im-  
perial hill. 1030

111

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme  
Renewed with no kind auspices:—to feel  
We are not what we have been, and to deem  
We are not what we should be, and to steel  
The heart against itself; and to conceal,  
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or  
aught,— 1036  
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal,—  
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,  
Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it is  
taught.

<sup>1</sup>In the former Gibbon had lived, in the latter Voltaire.

<sup>2</sup>Voltaire.

112

And for these words, thus woven into song,  
It may be that they are a harmless wile,—  
The coloring of the scenes which fleet  
along,

1042

Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile  
My breast, or that of others, for a while.  
Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am not  
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,  
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;

1047

I stood and stand alone,—remembered or  
forgot.

113

I have not loved the world, nor the world  
me;

I have not flattered its rank breath, nor  
bowed

1050

To its idolatries a patient knee,  
Nor coined my cheek to smiles, nor cried  
aloud

In worship of an echo; in the crowd  
They could not deem me one of such; I  
stood

Among them, but not of them; in a shroud  
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts,  
and still could,

1056

Had I not filed<sup>1</sup> my mind, which thus itself  
subdued.

114

I have not loved the world, nor the world  
me,—

But let us part fair foes; I do believe,  
Though I have found them not, that there  
may be

1060

Words which are things, hopes which will  
not deceive,

And virtues which are merciful, nor weave  
Snares for the failing; I would also deem  
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely  
grieve;

That two, or one, are almost what they  
seem,

1065

That goodness is no name, and happiness no  
dream.

115

My daughter! with thy name this song be-  
gun;

My daughter! with thy name thus much  
shall end;

I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none  
Can be so wrapped in thee; thou art the  
friend

1070

To whom the shadows of far years extend:  
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst be-  
hold,

My voice shall with thy future visions  
blend,

And reach into thy heart, when mine is  
cold,

A token and a tone, even from thy father's  
mold.

1075

116

To aid thy mind's development, to watch  
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see

Almost thy very growth, to view thee  
catch

Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to  
thee!

To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee, 1080  
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's  
kiss,—

This, it should seem, was not reserved for  
me;

Yet this was in my nature: as it is,  
I know not what is there, yet something like  
to this.

117

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be  
taught,

1085

I know that thou wilt love me; though my  
name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still  
fraught

With desolation, and a broken claim:

Though the grave closed between us,—  
'twere the same,

I know that thou wilt love me; though to  
drain

1090

My blood from out thy being were an aim,  
And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—

Still thou wouldst love me, still that more  
than life retain.

118

The child of love, though born in bitter-  
ness,

1094

And nurtured in convulsion! Of thy sire  
These were the elements, and thine no less.

As yet such are around thee, but thy fire  
Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far  
higher.

Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the  
sea

And from the mountains where I now re-  
spire,

1100

Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,  
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have  
been to me!

<sup>1</sup>Filed



# MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART<sup>1</sup>

*Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.<sup>2</sup>*

MAID of Athens, ere we part,  
Give, oh give me back my heart!  
Or, since that has left my breast,  
Keep it now, and take the rest!  
Hear my vow before I go, 5  
*Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

By those tresses unconfined,  
Woody by each Ægean wind;  
By those lids whose jetty fringe  
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge; 10  
By those wild eyes like the roe,  
*Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

By that lip I long to taste;  
By that zone-encircled waist;  
By all the token-flowers that tell 15  
What words can never speak so well;  
By love's alternate joy and woe,  
*Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

Maid of Athens! I am gone:  
Think of me, sweet! when alone. 20  
Though I fly to Istambol,<sup>3</sup>  
Athens holds my heart and soul:  
Can I cease to love thee? No!  
*Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

# SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY<sup>4</sup>

## I

SHE walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
And all that's best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:  
Thus mellowed to that tender light 5  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

## II

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
Had half impaired the nameless grace  
Which waves in every raven tress,  
Or softly lightens o'er her face; 10  
Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

<sup>1</sup>Written at Athens in 1810, published in 1812. Supposed to have been addressed to Theresa Macri, with whose mother Byron lodged while in Athens.

<sup>2</sup>My life, I love you.

<sup>3</sup>Constantinople.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1814, published in 1815.

## III

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
The smiles that win, the tints that glow, 15  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,  
A heart whose love is innocent!

# THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB<sup>5</sup>

## I

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the  
fold,  
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and  
gold;  
And the sheen of their spears was like stars  
on the sea,  
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep  
Galilee.

## II

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is  
green, 5  
That host with their banners at sunset were  
seen:  
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn  
hath blown,  
That host on the morrow lay withered and  
strown.

## III

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on  
the blast,  
And breathed in the face of the foe as he  
passed; 10  
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly  
and chill,  
And their hearts but once heaved, and for  
ever grew still!

## IV

And there lay the steed with his nostril all  
wide,  
But through it there rolled not the breath of  
his pride;  
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the  
turf, 15  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating  
surf.

## V

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his  
mail:  
And the tents were all silent, the banners  
alone,  
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown. 20

<sup>5</sup>Written and published in 1815. See 2 Kings, xviii-xix.

## VI

And the widows of Ashur<sup>1</sup> are loud in their  
 wail,  
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;  
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmeared by the  
 sword,  
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the  
 Lord!

WHEN WE TWO PARTED<sup>2</sup>

WHEN we two parted  
 In silence and tears,  
 Half broken-hearted  
 To sever for years,  
 Pale grew thy cheek and cold, 5  
 Colder thy kiss;  
 Truly that hour foretold  
 Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning  
 Sunk chill on my brow— 10  
 It felt like the warning  
 Of what I feel now.  
 Thy vows are all broken,  
 And light is thy fame:  
 I hear thy name spoken, 15  
 And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,  
 A knell to mine ear;  
 A shudder comes o'er me—  
 Why wert thou so dear? 20  
 They know not I knew thee,  
 Who knew thee too well:  
 Long, long shall I rue thee,  
 Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met— 25  
 In silence I grieve,  
 That thy heart could forget,  
 Thy spirit deceive.  
 If I should meet thee 30  
 After long years,  
 How should I greet thee?—  
 With silence and tears.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC<sup>3</sup>

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that  
 it takes away,  
 When the glow of early thought declines in  
 feeling's dull decay;  
 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush  
 alone, which fades so fast,  
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere  
 youth itself be past.

<sup>1</sup>Assyria.<sup>2</sup>Written in 1808, published in 1816.<sup>3</sup>Written in 1815, published in 1816.

Then the few whose spirits float above the  
 wreck of happiness 5  
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of  
 excess:  
 The magnet of their course is gone, or only  
 points in vain  
 The shore to which their shivered sail shall  
 never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death  
 itself comes down;  
 It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not  
 dream its own; 10  
 That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain  
 of our tears,  
 And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis  
 where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and  
 mirth distract the breast,  
 Through midnight hours that yield no more  
 their former hope of rest;  
 'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret  
 wreath, 15  
 All green and wildly fresh without, but worn  
 and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I  
 have been,  
 Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many  
 a vanished scene;  
 As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all  
 brackish though they be,  
 So, midst the withered waste of life, those  
 tears would flow to me. 20

STANZAS FOR MUSIC<sup>4</sup>

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters  
 With a magic like thee;  
 And like music on the waters  
 Is thy sweet voice to me:  
 When, as if its sound were causing 5  
 The charmed ocean's pausing,  
 The waves lie still and gleaming,  
 And the lulled winds seem dreaming:

And the midnight moon is weaving  
 Her bright chain o'er the deep; 10  
 Whose breast is gently heaving,  
 As an infant's asleep:  
 So the spirit bows before thee,  
 To listen and adore thee;  
 With a full but soft emotion, 15  
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

<sup>4</sup>Written and published in 1816.

SONNET ON CHILLON<sup>1</sup>

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!  
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,  
 For there thy habitation is the heart—  
 The heart which love of thee alone can bind;  
 And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—  
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless  
 gloom, 6  
 Their country conquers with their martyr-  
 dom,  
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every  
 wind.  
 Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,  
 And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,  
 Until his very steps have left a trace 11  
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,  
 By Bonnivard!<sup>2</sup> May none those marks  
 efface!  
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

THE PRISONER OF CHIL-  
LON

## I

MY HAIR is gray, but not with years,  
 Nor grew it white  
 In a single night,  
 As men's have grown from sudden fears:  
 My limbs are bowed, though not with toil, 5  
 But rusted with a vile repose,  
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,  
 And mine has been the fate of those  
 To whom the goodly earth and air  
 Are banned, and barred—forbidden fare: 10  
 But this was for my father's faith  
 I suffered chains and courted death;  
 That father perished at the stake  
 For tenets he would not forsake;  
 And for the same his lineal race 15  
 In darkness found a dwelling-place;  
 We were seven—who now are one,  
 Six in youth, and one in age,  
 Finished as they had begun,  
 Proud of Persecution's rage; 20  
 One in fire, and two in field,  
 Their belief with blood have sealed,  
 Dying as their father died,  
 For the God their foes denied;

<sup>1</sup>This and the following poem were written in June, 1816, immediately after a visit with Shelley to the Castle of Chillon; published in the same year. The Castle is on the shore of the Lake of Geneva at the end farthest from the city of Geneva.

<sup>2</sup>A Swiss republican (1493-1570) who aided the Genevese in an attempt to free their city from the rule of the Duke of Savoy. He was imprisoned for six years at Chillon, four of which were spent in the cell Byron describes. At the time when Byron wrote his poem he knew little or nothing of the actual history of Bonnivard, so that Byron's "Prisoner" is largely an imaginary character.

Three were in a dungeon cast, 25  
 Of whom this wreck is left the last.

## II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mold,  
 In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,  
 There are seven columns, massy and gray,  
 Dim with a dull imprisoned ray, 30  
 A sunbeam which hath lost its way,  
 And through the crevice and the cleft  
 Of the thick wall is fallen and left;  
 Creeping o'er the floor so damp,  
 Like a marsh's meteor lamp: 35  
 And in each pillar there is a ring,  
 And in each ring there is a chain;  
 That iron is a cankering thing,  
 For in these limbs its teeth remain,  
 With marks that will not wear away, 40  
 Till I have done with this new day,  
 Which now is painful to these eyes,  
 Which have not seen the sun so rise  
 For years—I cannot count them o'er,  
 I lost their long and heavy score, 45  
 When my last brother drooped and died,  
 And I lay living by his side.

## III

They chained us each to a column stone,  
 And we were three—yet, each alone;  
 We could not move a single pace, 50  
 We could not see each other's face,  
 But with that pale and livid light  
 That made us strangers in our sight:  
 And thus together—yet apart,  
 Fettered in hand, but joined in heart, 55  
 'Twas still some solace, in the dearth  
 Of the pure elements of earth,  
 To hearken to each other's speech,  
 And each turn comforter to each  
 With some new hope, or legend old, 60  
 Or song heroically bold;  
 But even these at length grew cold.  
 Our voices took a dreary tone,  
 An echo of the dungeon stone,  
 A grating sound, not full and free, 65  
 As they of yore were wont to be:  
 It might be fancy, but to me  
 They never sounded like our own.

## IV

I was the eldest of the three,  
 And to uphold and cheer the rest 70  
 I ought to do—and did my best—  
 And each did well in his degree.  
 The youngest, whom my father loved,  
 Because our mother's brow was given  
 To him, with eyes as blue as heaven— 75  
 For him my soul was sorely moved;



And truly might it be distressed  
 To see such bird in such a nest;  
 For he was beautiful as day—  
   (When day was beautiful to me 80  
   As to young eagles, being free)—  
   A polar day, which will not see  
 A sunset till its summer's gone,  
   Its sleepless summer of long light,  
 The snow-clad offspring of the sun: 85  
   And thus he was as pure and bright,  
 And in his natural spirit gay,  
 With tears for nought but others' ills,  
 And then they flowed like mountain rills,  
   Unless he could assuage the woe 90  
   Which he abhorred to view below.

## V

The other was as pure of mind,  
 But formed to combat with his kind;  
 Strong in his frame, and of a mood  
 Which 'gainst the world in war had stood, 95  
 And perished in the foremost rank  
   With joy:—but not in chains to pine:  
 His spirit withered with their clank,  
   I saw it silently decline—  
   And so perchance in sooth did mine: 100  
 But yet I forced it on to cheer  
 Those relics of a home so dear.  
 He was a hunter of the hills,  
   Had followed there the deer and wolf;  
   To him this dungeon was a gulf, 105  
 And fettered feet the worst of ills.

## VI

Lake Lemán lies by Chillon's walls:  
 A thousand feet in depth below  
 Its massy waters meet and flow;  
 Thus much the fathom-line was sent 110  
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,  
   Which round about the wave enthalls:  
 A double dungeon wall and wave  
 Have made—and like a living grave  
 Below the surface of the lake 115  
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay:  
 We heard it ripple night and day;  
   Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;  
 And I have felt the winter's spray  
 Wash through the bars when winds were high  
 And wanton in the happy sky; 121  
   And then the very rock hath rocked,  
   And I have felt it shake, unshocked,  
 Because I could have smiled to see  
 The death that would have set me free. 125

## VII

I said my nearer brother pined,  
 I said his mighty heart declined,  
 He loathed and put away his food;  
 It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,

For we were used to hunter's fare, 130  
 And for the like had little care:  
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat  
 Was changed for water from the moat,  
 Our bread was such as captives' tears  
 Have moistened many a thousand years, 135  
 Since man first pent his fellow men  
 Like brutes within an iron den;  
 But what were these to us or him?  
 These wasted not his heart or limb;  
 My brother's soul was of that mold 140  
 Which in a palace had grown cold,  
 Had his free breathing been denied  
 The range of the steep mountain's side;  
 But why delay the truth?—he died.  
 I saw, and could not hold his head, 145  
 Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—  
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,  
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.  
 He died, and they unlocked his chain,  
 And scooped for him a shallow grave 150  
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.  
 I begged them as a boon to lay  
 His corse in dust whereon the day  
 Might shine—it was a foolish thought,  
 But then within my brain it wrought, 155  
 That even in death his freeborn breast  
 In such a dungeon could not rest.  
 I might have spared my idle prayer—  
 They coldly laughed, and laid him there:  
 The flat and turfless earth above 160  
 The being we so much did love;  
 His empty chain above it leant,  
 Such murder's fitting monument!

## VIII

But he, the favorite and the flower,  
 Most cherished since his natal hour, 165  
 His mother's image in fair face,  
 The infant love of all his race,  
 His martyred father's dearest thought,  
 My latest care, for whom I sought  
 To hoard my life, that his might be 170  
 Less wretched now, and one day free;  
 He, too, who yet had held untired  
 A spirit natural or inspired—  
 He, too, was struck, and day by day  
 Was withered on the stalk away. 175  
 Oh, God! it is a fearful thing  
 To see the human soul take wing  
 In any shape, in any mood:  
 I've seen it rushing forth in blood,  
 I've seen it on the breaking ocean 180  
 Strive with a swell'n convulsive motion,  
 I've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
 Of sin delirious with its dread;  
 But these were horrors—this was woe  
 Unmixed with such—but sure and slow: 185  
 He faded, and so calm and meek,  
 So softly worn, so sweetly weak,

So tearless, yet so tender, kind,  
 And grieved for those he left behind;  
 With all the while a cheek whose bloom 190  
 Was as a mockery of the tomb,  
 Whose tints as gently sunk away  
 As a departing rainbow's ray;  
 An eye of most transparent light,  
 That almost made the dungeon bright, 195  
 And not a word of murmur, not  
 A groan o'er his untimely lot,—  
 A little talk of better days,  
 A little hope my own to raise,  
 For I was sunk in silence—lost 200  
 In this last loss, of all the most;  
 And then the sighs he would suppress  
 Of fainting nature's feebleness,  
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less:  
 I listened, but I could not hear; 205  
 I called, for I was wild with fear;  
 I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread  
 Would not be thus admonished;  
 I called, and thought I heard a sound—  
 I burst my chain with one strong bound, 210  
 And rushed to him:—I found him not,  
 I only stirred in this black spot,  
 I only lived, I only drew  
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;  
 The last, the sole, the dearest link 215  
 Between me and the eternal brink,  
 Which bound me to my failing race,  
 Was broken in this fatal place.  
 One on the earth, and one beneath—  
 My brothers—both had ceased to breathe: 220  
 I took that hand which lay so still,  
 Alas! my own was full as chill;  
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,  
 But felt that I was still alive—  
 A frantic feeling, when we know 225  
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.  
 I know not why  
 I could not die,  
 I had no earthly hope but faith,  
 And that forbade a selfish death. 230

## IX

What next befell me then and there  
 I know not well—I never knew—  
 First came the loss of light, and air,  
 And then of darkness too:  
 I had no thought, no feeling—none— 235  
 Among the stones I stood a stone,  
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,  
 As shrubless crags within the mist;  
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray;  
 It was not night, it was not day; 240  
 It was not even the dungeon-light  
 So hateful to my heavy sight,  
 But vacancy absorbing space,  
 And fixedness without a place;  
 There were no stars, no earth, no time, 245

No check, no change, no good, no crime,  
 But silence, and a stirless breath  
 Which neither was of life nor death;  
 A sea of stagnant idleness,  
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless! 250

## X

A light broke in upon my brain,—  
 It was the carol of a bird;  
 It ceased, and then it came again,  
 The sweetest song ear ever heard,  
 And mine was thankful till my eyes 255  
 Ran over with the glad surprise,  
 And they that moment could not see  
 I was the mate of misery;  
 But then by dull degrees came back  
 My senses to their wonted track; 260  
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor  
 Close slowly round me as before,  
 I saw the glimmer of the sun  
 Creeping as it before had done,  
 But through the crevice where it came 265  
 That bird was perched, as fond and tame,  
 And tamer than upon the tree;  
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,  
 And song that said a thousand things,  
 And seemed to say them all for me! 270  
 I never saw its like before,  
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more:  
 It seemed like me to want a mate,  
 But was not half so desolate,  
 And it was come to love me when 275  
 None lived to love me so again,  
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,  
 Had brought me back to feel and think.  
 I know not if it late were free,  
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine, 280  
 But knowing well captivity,  
 Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!  
 Or if it were, in winged guise,  
 A visitant from Paradise; 284  
 For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while  
 Which made me both to weep and smile—  
 I sometimes deemed that it might be  
 My brother's soul come down to me;  
 But then at last away it flew,  
 And then 'twas mortal well I knew, 290  
 For he would never thus have flown,  
 And left me twice so doubly lone,  
 Lone as the corse within its shroud,  
 Lone as a solitary cloud,—  
 A single cloud on a sunny day, 295  
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,  
 A frown upon the atmosphere,  
 That hath no business to appear  
 When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

## XI

A kind of change came in my fate, 300  
 My keepers grew compassionate;

I know not what had made them so,  
 They were inured to sights of woe,  
 But so it was:—my broken chain  
 With links unfastened did remain, 305  
 And it was liberty to stride  
 Along my cell from side to side,  
 And up and down, and then athwart,  
 And tread it over every part;  
 And round the pillars one by one, 310  
 Returning where my walk begun,  
 Avoiding only, as I trod,  
 My brothers' graves without a sod;  
 For if I thought with heedless tread  
 My step profaned their lowly bed, 315  
 My breath came gaspingly and thick,  
 And my crushed heart felt blind and sick.

## XII

I made a footing in the wall,  
 It was not therefrom to escape,  
 For I had buried one and all 320  
 Who loved me in a human shape;  
 And the whole earth would henceforth be  
 A wider prison unto me:  
 No child, no sire, no kin had I,  
 No partner in my misery; 325  
 I thought of this, and I was glad,  
 For thought of them had<sup>1</sup> made me mad;  
 But I was curious to ascend  
 To my barred windows, and to bend  
 Once more, upon the mountains high, 330  
 The quiet of a loving eye.

## XIII

I saw them, and they were the same,  
 They were not changed like me in frame;  
 I saw their thousand years of snow  
 On high—their wide long lake below, 335  
 And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;  
 I heard the torrents leap and gush  
 O'er channeled rock and broken bush;  
 I saw the white-walled distant town,  
 And whiter sails go skimming down; 340  
 And then there was a little isle,  
 Which in my very face did smile,  
 The only one in view;  
 A small green isle, it seemed no more,  
 Scarce broader than my dungeon floor, 345  
 But in it there were three tall trees,  
 And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,  
 And by it there were waters flowing,  
 And on it there were young flowers growing,  
 Of gentle breath and hue. 350  
 The fish swam by the castle wall,  
 And they seemed joyous each and all:  
 The eagle rode the rising blast,  
 Methought he never flew so fast  
 As then to me he seemed to fly; 355

And then new tears came in my eye,  
 And I felt troubled—and would fain  
 I had not left my recent chain;  
 And when I did descend again,  
 The darkness of my dim abode 360  
 Fell on me as a heavy load;  
 It was as is a new-dug grave,  
 Closing o'er one we sought to save,—  
 And yet my glance, too much oppressed,  
 Had almost need of such a rest. 365

## XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,  
 I kept no count, I took no note,  
 I had no hope my eyes to raise,  
 And clear them of their dreary mote;  
 At last men came to set me free; 370  
 I asked not why, and recked not where;  
 \*It was at length the same to me,  
 Fettered or fetterless to be,  
 I learned to love despair.  
 And thus when they appeared at last, 375  
 And all my bonds aside were cast,  
 These heavy walls to me had grown  
 A hermitage—and all my own!  
 And half I felt as they were come  
 To tear me from a second home: 380  
 With spiders I had friendship made,  
 And watched them in their sullen trade,  
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,  
 And why should I feel less than they?  
 We were all inmates of one place, 385  
 And I, the monarch of each race,  
 Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!  
 In quiet we had learned to dwell;  
 My very chains and I grew friends,  
 So much a long communion tends 390  
 To make us what we are:—even I  
 Regained my freedom with a sigh.

TO THOMAS MOORE<sup>2</sup>

MY BOAT is on the shore,  
 And my bark is on the sea;  
 But, before I go, Tom Moore,  
 Here's a double health to thee!  
 Here's a sigh to those who love me, 5  
 And a smile to those who hate;  
 And, whatever sky's above me,  
 Here's a heart for every fate.  
 Though the Ocean roar around me,  
 Yet it still shall bear me on; 10  
 Though a desert shall surround me,  
 It hath springs that may be won.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1817 (the first stanza in 1816), published in 1821. This poem and the two following ones were all sent in letters to Thomas Moore (1779–1852), Irish poet and wit, and Byron's friend and biographer.

<sup>1</sup>Would have.



Were't the last drop in the well,  
 As I gasped upon the brink,  
 Ere my fainting spirit fell, 15  
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,  
 The libation I would pour  
 Should be—peace with thine and mine,  
 And a health to thee, Tom Moore. 20

## SO WE'LL GO NO MORE A-ROVING<sup>1</sup>

So WE'LL go no more a-roving  
 So late into the night,  
 Though the heart be still as loving,  
 And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath, 5  
 And the soul wears out the breast,  
 And the heart must pause to breathe,  
 And Love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,  
 And the day returns too soon, 10  
 Yet we'll go no more a-roving  
 By the light of the moon.

## TO THOMAS MOORE<sup>2</sup>

WHAT are you doing now,  
 Oh Thomas Moore?  
 What are you doing now,  
 Oh Thomas Moore?  
 Sighing or suing now, 5  
 Riming or wooing now,  
 Billing or cooing now,  
 Which, Thomas Moore?

But the Carnival's coming,  
 Oh Thomas Moore! 10  
 The Carnival's coming,  
 Oh Thomas Moore!  
 Masking and humming,  
 Fifeing and drumming,  
 Guitarring and strumming, 15  
 Oh Thomas Moore!

## BEPPPO:

### A VENETIAN STORY<sup>3</sup>

*Rosalind.* Farewell, Monsieur Traveler: Look  
 you lisp, and wear strange suits: disable all the

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1817, published in 1830.

<sup>2</sup>Written in December, 1816, and published in 1830.

<sup>3</sup>Written in the autumn of 1817, published in 1818. Byron's stimulus to the writing of *Beppo* came from the poem in *ot-tava rima* known as *Whistlecraft*, by John Hookham Frere, in which this writer attempted to imitate in English the tone and methods of Pulci and his Italian followers. At the time

benefits of your own country; be out of love with your Nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think that you have swam in a *Gondola*.—As *You Like it*, Act IV, Scene 1.

### Annotation of the Commentators.

That is, been at Venice, which was much visited by the young English gentlemen of those times, and was then what Paris is now—the seat of all dissoluteness.—S. A.

### I

'Tis known, at least it should be, that through-  
 out  
 All countries of the Catholic persuasion,  
 Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes  
 about,<sup>4</sup>  
 The people take their fill of recreation,  
 And buy repentance, ere they grow devout, 5  
 However high their rank, or low their sta-  
 tion,  
 With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking,  
 masking,  
 And other things which may be had for asking.

### 2

The moment night with dusky mantle covers  
 The skies (and the more duskily the better),  
 The time less liked by husbands than by  
 lovers 11  
 Begins, and prudery flings aside her fetter;  
 And gayety on restless tiptoe hovers,  
 Giggling with all the gallants who beset  
 her;  
 And there are songs and quavers, roaring,  
 humming, 15  
 Guitars, and every other sort of strumming.

### 3

And there are dresses splendid, but fantastical,  
 Masks of all times and nations, Turks and  
 Jews,  
 And harlequins and clowns, with feats  
 gymnastical,  
 Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles, and 20  
 Hindoos;

when he read *Whistlecraft* Byron knew little or nothing of Frere's models, but he at once divined the possibilities of this style of writing. He had found, in a word, a form of verse which enabled him to write as he talked, perfectly at his ease, unobstructed by conventions, free to express himself completely. The result was *Beppo*, *The Vision of Judgment*, and *Don Juan*. *Beppo* "is our best, almost our only comic story in verse since Chaucer wrote the tales of the Reeve and the Miller, the Friar and the Summoner. This is high praise, artistically, and Byron's slight, slight story, involved in endless digressions, may seem hardly to deserve it, yet Chaucer could not have bettered . . . the closing stanzas and Laura's welcome to her long-lost husband" (H. J. C. Grierson, Preface to *Poems of Lord Byron*, p. xii).

<sup>4</sup>*I. e.*, in the period just preceding Lent.

All kinds of dress, except the ecclesiastical,  
 All people, as their fancies hit, may choose,  
 But no one in these parts may quiz<sup>1</sup> the  
 clergy,—  
 Therefore take heed, ye Freethinkers! I  
 charge ye.

4

You'd better walk about begirt with briers, 25  
 Instead of coat and smallclothes,<sup>2</sup> than put  
 on  
 A single stitch reflecting upon friars,  
 Although you swore it only was in fun;  
 They'd haul you o'er the coals, and stir the  
 fires  
 Of Phlegethon<sup>3</sup> with every mother's son, 30  
 Nor say one mass to cool the caldron's bubble  
 That boiled your bones, unless you paid them  
 double.

5

But saving this, you may put on whate'er 33  
 You like by way of doublet, cape, or cloak,  
 Such as in Monmouth-street,<sup>4</sup> or in Rag Fair,  
 Would rig you out in seriousness or joke;  
 And even in Italy such places are,  
 With prettier name in softer accents spoke,  
 For, bating Covent Garden, I can hit on  
 No place that's called "Piazza" in Great  
 Britain. 40

6

This feast is named the Carnival, which being  
 Interpreted, implies "farewell to flesh":  
 So called, because the name and thing agreeing,  
 Through Lent they live on fish both salt  
 and fresh.  
 But why they usher Lent with so much glee  
 in, 45  
 Is more than I can tell, although I guess  
 'Tis as we take a glass with friends at parting,  
 In the stage-coach or packet, just at starting.

7

And thus they bid farewell to carnal dishes,  
 And solid meats, and highly spiced ra-  
 gouts,<sup>5</sup> 50  
 To live for forty days on ill-dressed fishes,  
 Because they have no sauces to their  
 stews;  
 A thing which causes many "poohs" and  
 "pishes,"  
 And several oaths (which would not suit  
 the Muse),

From travelers accustomed from a boy 55  
 To eat their salmon, at the least, with soy;<sup>6</sup>

8

And therefore humbly I would recommend  
 "The curious in fish-sauce," before they  
 cross  
 The sea, to bid their cook, or wife, or friend,  
 Walk or ride to the Strand, and buy in gross  
 (Or if set out beforehand, these may send 61  
 By any means least liable to loss)  
 Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Harvey,  
 Or, by the Lord! a Lent will well nigh starve  
 ye;

9

That is to say, if your religion's Roman, 65  
 And you at Rome would do as Romans do,  
 According to the proverb,—although no man,  
 If foreign, is obliged to fast; and you,  
 If Protestant, or sickly, or a woman,  
 Would rather dine in sin on a ragout— 70  
 Dine and be d—d! I don't mean to be  
 coarse,  
 But that's the penalty, to say no worse.

10

Of all the places where the Carnival  
 Was most facetious in the days of yore,  
 For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,  
 And masque, and mime, and mystery, and  
 more 76  
 Than I have time to tell now, or at all,  
 Venice the bell from every city bore,—  
 And at the moment when I fix my story,  
 That sea-born city was in all her glory. 80

11

They've pretty faces yet, those same Vene-  
 tians,  
 Black eyes, arched brows, and sweet ex-  
 pressions still;  
 Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,  
 In ancient arts by moderns mimicked ill;  
 And like so many Venuses of Titian's 85  
 (The best's at Florence—see it, if ye will),  
 They look when leaning over the balcony,  
 Or stepped from out a picture by Giorgione,

12

Whose tints are truth and beauty at their best;  
 And when you to Manfrini's palace go, 90  
 That picture (however fine the rest)  
 Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;  
 It may perhaps be also to *your* zest,  
 And that's the cause I rime upon it so:

<sup>1</sup>Ridicule. <sup>2</sup>Knee breeches.

<sup>3</sup>River of Hades containing fire instead of water.

<sup>4</sup>Noted throughout the eighteenth century as a place for the sale of second-hand clothes.

<sup>5</sup>Highly seasoned stew of meat with vegetables.

<sup>6</sup>Chinese and Japanese sauce for fish made from beans by long fermentation followed by long digestion in brine.

<sup>7</sup>I. e., surpassed every city.

'Tis but a portrait of his son, and wife, 95  
And self; but *such* a woman! Love in life!

## 13

Love in full life and length, not love ideal,  
No, nor ideal beauty, that fine name,  
But something better still, so very real,  
That the sweet model must have been the  
same, 100

A thing that you would purchase, beg, or  
steal,

Were't not impossible, besides a shame:  
The face recalls some face, as 'twere with  
pain, 103

You once have seen, but ne'er will see again;

## 14

One of those forms which flit by us, when we  
Are young, and fix our eyes on every face;  
And, oh! the loveliness at times we see

In momentary gliding, the soft grace,  
The youth, the bloom, the beauty which agree,

In many a nameless being we retrace, 110  
Whose course and home we knew not, nor  
shall know,

Like the lost Pleiad seen no more below.<sup>1</sup>

## 15

I said that like a picture by Giorgione  
Venetian women were, and so they *are*,  
Particularly seen from a balcony 115

(For beauty's sometimes best set off afar),  
And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,<sup>2</sup>

They peep from out the blind, or o'er the  
bar;

And truth to say, they're mostly very pretty,  
And rather like to show it, more's the pity! 120

## 16

For glances beget ogles,<sup>3</sup> ogles sighs,  
Sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a  
letter,

Which flies on wings of light-heeled Mercuries,  
Who do such things because they know no  
better;

And then, God knows what mischief may  
arise, 125

When love links two young people in one  
fetter,

Vile assignments, and adulterous beds,  
Elopements, broken vows, and hearts, and  
heads.

<sup>1</sup>The seven Pleiads before being changed into stars were daughters of Atlas. When their metamorphosis took place one of them left her station in the heavens so that she might not behold the ruin of Troy, founded by her son.

<sup>2</sup>Italian playwright (1707-1793).

<sup>3</sup>Coquettish looks.

## 17

Shakespeare described the sex in Desdemona  
As very fair, but yet suspect in fame,<sup>4</sup> 130  
And to this day from Venice to Verona

Such matters may be probably the same,  
Except that since those times was never  
known a

Husband whom mere suspicion could in-  
flame

To suffocate a wife no more than twenty, 135  
Because she had a "cavalier servente."<sup>5</sup>

## 18

Their jealousy (if they are ever jealous)

Is of a fair complexion altogether,  
Not like that sooty devil of Othello's, 139

Which smothers women in a bed of feather,  
But worthier of these much more jolly fellows,

When weary of the matrimonial tether  
His head for such a wife no mortal bothers,  
But takes at once another, or *another's*.

## 19

Didst ever see a Gondola? For fear 145

You should not, I'll describe it you exactly:  
'Tis a long covered boat that's common here,

Carved at the prow, built lightly, but com-  
pactly,

Rowed by two rowers, each called "Gon-  
dolier,"

It glides along the water looking blackly,  
Just like a coffin clapped in a canoe, 151  
Where none can make out what you say or do.

## 20

And up and down the long canals they go,

And under the Rialto<sup>6</sup> shoot along,  
By night and day, all paces, swift or slow, 155

And round the theaters, a sable throng,  
They wait in their dusk livery of woe,—

But not to them do woeful things belong,  
For sometimes they contain a deal of fun,  
Like mourning coaches when the funeral's  
done. 160

## 21

But to my story.—'Twas some years ago,

It may be thirty, forty, more or less,  
The Carnival was at its height, and so

Were all kinds of buffoonery and dress;  
A certain lady went to see the show, 165

Her real name I know not, nor can guess,  
And so we'll call her Laura, if you please,  
Because it slips into my verse with ease.

<sup>4</sup>See *Othello*, III, iii, 206-208.

<sup>5</sup>Literally, a serving cavalier; one attentive to a married woman.

<sup>6</sup>A bridge, as the word is here used; more properly the island to which the bridge leads, on which is situated the Exchange.



22

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years  
Which certain people call a "*certain age*,"  
Which yet the most uncertain age appears, 171  
Because I never heard, nor could engage  
A person yet by prayers, or bribes, or tears,  
To name, define by speech, or write on page,  
The period meant precisely by that word,—  
Which surely is exceedingly absurd. 176

23

Laura was blooming still, had made the best  
Of time, and time returned the compliment,  
And treated her genteelly, so that, dressed,  
She looked extremely well where'er she  
went; 180  
A pretty woman is a welcome guest,  
And Laura's brow a frown had rarely bent;  
Indeed, she shone all smiles, and seemed to  
flatter  
Mankind with her black eyes for looking at  
her.

24

She was a married woman; 'tis convenient, 185  
Because in Christian countries 'tis a rule  
To view their little slips with eyes more leni-  
ent;  
Whereas if single ladies play the fool  
(Unless within the period intervenient  
A well-timed wedding makes the scandal  
cool), 190  
I don't know how they ever can get over it,  
Except they manage never to discover it.<sup>1</sup>

25

Her husband sailed upon the Adriatic,  
And made some voyages, too, in other seas,  
And when he lay in quarantine for pratique<sup>2</sup>  
(A forty days' precaution 'gainst disease),  
His wife would mount, at times, her highest  
attic, 197  
For thence she could discern the ship with  
ease:

He was a merchant trading to Aleppo,  
His name Giuseppe, called more briefly,  
Beppo. 200

26

He was a man as dusky as a Spaniard,  
Sunburnt with travel, yet a portly figure;  
Though colored, as it were, within a tanyard,  
He was a person both of sense and vigor—  
A better seaman never yet did man yard; 205  
And she, although her manners showed no  
rigor,

Was deemed a woman of the strictest prin-  
ciple,  
So much as to be thought almost invincible.

27

But several years elapsed since they had met;  
Some people thought the ship was lost, and  
some 210  
That he had somehow blundered into debt,  
And did not like the thought of steering  
home;  
And there were several offered any bet,  
Or that he would, or that he would not  
come; 214  
For most men (till by losing rendered sager)  
Will back their own opinions with a wager.

28

'Tis said that their last parting was pathetic,  
As partings often are, or ought to be,  
And their presentment was quite prophetic,  
That they should never more each other see  
(A sort of morbid-feeling, half poetic, 221  
Which I have known occur in two or three),  
When kneeling on the shore upon her sad  
knee  
He left this Adriatic Ariadne.<sup>3</sup>

29

And Laura waited long, and wept a little, 225  
And thought of wearing weeds, as well she  
might;  
She almost lost all appetite for victual,  
And could not sleep with ease alone at  
night;  
She deemed the window-frames and shutters  
brittle  
Against a daring housebreaker or sprite, 230  
And so she thought it prudent to connect her  
With a vice-husband, chiefly to protect her.

30

She chose (and what is there they will not  
choose, 233  
If only you will but oppose their choice?),  
Till Beppo should return from his long cruise,  
And bid once more her faithful heart rejoice,  
A man some women like, and yet abuse—  
A coxcomb was he by the public voice;  
A Count of wealth, they said, as well as  
quality,  
And in his pleasures of great liberality. 240

<sup>3</sup>Ariadne, daughter of Minos, King of Crete, loved Theseus and gave him the thread which guided him out of the Cretan Labyrinth. After he had been thus aided, however, Theseus deserted her.

<sup>1</sup>Never to let it be known.

<sup>2</sup>A clean bill of health after quarantine.

31

And then he was a Count, and then he knew  
Music, and dancing, fiddling, French and  
Tuscan;

The last not easy, be it known to you,  
For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.  
He was a critic upon operas, too, <sup>245</sup>  
And knew all niceties of sock and buskin;  
And no Venetian audience could endure a  
Song, scene, or air, when he cried "secca-  
tura!"<sup>1</sup>

32

His "bravo" was decisive, for that sound <sup>249</sup>  
Hushed "Academie" sighed in silent awe;  
The fiddlers trembled as he looked around,  
For fear of some false note's detected flaw;  
The "prima donna's" tuneful heart would  
bound,  
Dreading the deep damnation of his  
"bah!"

Soprano, basso, even the contra-alto, <sup>255</sup>  
Wished him five fathom under the Rialto.

33

He patronized the Improvisatori,<sup>2</sup>  
Nay, could himself extemporize some  
stanzas,  
Wrote rimes, sang songs, could also tell a  
story,  
Sold pictures, and was skillful in the dance  
as <sup>260</sup>

Italians can be, though in this their glory  
Must surely yield the palm to that which  
France has;

In short, he was a perfect cavaliero,  
And to his very valet seemed a hero. <sup>264</sup>

34

Then he was faithful too, as well as amorous;  
So that no sort of female could complain,  
Although they're now and then a little clamor-  
ous,

He never put the pretty souls in pain;  
His heart was one of those which most  
enamor us,

Wax to receive, and marble to retain: <sup>270</sup>  
He was a lover of the good old school,  
Who still become more constant as they cool.

35

No wonder such accomplishments should  
turn <sup>273</sup>

A female head, however sage and steady—

<sup>1</sup>I. e., "It's a bore."

<sup>2</sup>Performers who recited or sang verses composed ex-  
temporaneously.

With scarce a hope that Beppo could return,  
In law he was almost as good as dead, he  
Nor sent, nor wrote, nor showed the least  
concern,

And she had waited several years already;  
And really if a man won't let us know  
That he's alive, he's *dead*—or should be so. <sup>280</sup>

36

Besides, within the Alps, to every woman  
(Although, God knows, it is a grievous sin),  
'Tis, I may say, permitted to have *two* men;  
I can't tell who first brought the custom in,  
But "Cavalier Serventes" are quite common,  
And no one notices nor cares a pin; <sup>286</sup>  
And we may call this (not to say the worst)  
A *second* marriage which corrupts the *first*.

37

The word was formerly a "Cicisbeo,"  
But *that* is now grown vulgar and indecent;  
The Spaniards call the person a "*Cortejo*,"<sup>3</sup>  
For the same mode subsists in Spain,  
though recent; <sup>292</sup>  
In short, it reaches from the Po to Teio,<sup>4</sup>  
And may perhaps at last be o'er the sea sent:  
But Heaven preserve Old England from such  
courses! <sup>295</sup>  
Or what becomes of damage and divorces?

38

However, I still think, with all due deference  
To the fair *single* part of the creation,  
That married ladies should preserve the pre-  
ference

In *tête-à-tête* or general conversation— <sup>300</sup>  
And this I say without peculiar reference  
To England, France, or any other nation—  
Because they know the world, and are at ease,  
And being natural, naturally please. <sup>304</sup>

39

'Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming,  
But shy and awkward at first coming out,  
So much alarmed, that she is quite alarming,  
All giggle, blush; half pertness, and half  
pout;

And glancing at *Mamma*, for fear there's harm  
in <sup>309</sup>

What you, she, it, or they, may be about,  
The nursery still lips out in all they utter—  
Besides, they always smell of bread and but-  
ter.

<sup>3</sup>This and *cicisbeo* are, as Byron says, synonymous with  
*cavalier servente*.

<sup>4</sup>Teio. or Tykö. is in Finland.

40

But "Cavalier Servente" is the phrase  
 Used in politest circles to express  
 This supernumerary slave, who stays 315  
 Close to the lady as a part of dress,  
 Her word the only law which he obeys.  
 His is no sinecure, as you may guess;  
 Coach, servants, gondola, he goes to call, 319  
 And carries fan and tippet,<sup>1</sup> gloves and shawl.

41

With all its sinful doings, I must say,  
 That Italy's a pleasant place to me,  
 Who love to see the Sun shine every day,  
 And vines (not nailed to walls) from tree to tree 324  
 Festooned, much like the back scene of a play,  
 Or melodrame, which people flock to see,  
 When the first act is ended by a dance  
 In vineyards copied from the south of France.

42

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,  
 Without being forced to bid my groom be  
 sure 330  
 My cloak is round his middle strapped about,  
 Because the skies are not the most secure;  
 I know too that, if stopped upon my route,  
 Where the green alleys windingly allure,  
 Reeling with *grapes* red wagons choke the  
 way,— 335  
 In England 'twould be dung, dust, or a dray.

43

I also like to dine on becaficas,<sup>2</sup>  
 To see the Sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,  
 Not through a misty morning twinkling weak  
 as  
 A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin  
 sorrow,  
 But with all Heaven t' himself; the day will  
 break as 341  
 Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to bor-  
 row  
 That sort of farthing candlelight which glim-  
 mers  
 Where reeking London's smoky caldron sim-  
 mers.

44

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,  
 Which melts like kisses from a female  
 mouth, 346  
 And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,  
 With syllables which breathe of the sweet  
 South,

And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,  
 That not a single accent seems uncouth, 350  
 Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting  
 guttural,  
 Which we're obliged to hiss, and spit, and  
 sputter all.

45

I like the women too (forgive my folly),  
 From the rich peasant cheek of ruddy  
 bronze, 354  
 And large black eyes that flash on you a volley  
 Of rays that say a thousand things at once,  
 To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,  
 But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,  
 Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,  
 Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies. 360

46

Eve of the land which still is Paradise!  
 Italian beauty! didst thou not inspire  
 Raphael, who died in thy embrace, and vies  
 With all we know of Heaven, or can desire,  
 In what he hath bequeathed us?—in what  
 guise, 365  
 Though flashing from the fervor of the lyre,  
 Would *words* describe thy past and present  
 glow,  
 While yet Canova<sup>3</sup> can create below?

47

"England! with all thy faults I love thee  
 still,"<sup>4</sup>  
 I said at Calais, and have not forgot it; 370  
 I like to speak and lucubrate my fill;  
 I like the government (but that is not it);  
 I like the freedom of the press and quill;  
 I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got  
 it);  
 I like a parliamentary debate, 375  
 Particularly when 'tis not too late;

48

I like the taxes, when they're not too many;  
 I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear;  
 I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any;  
 Have no objection to a pot of beer; 380  
 I like the weather, when it is not rainy,  
 That is, I like two months of every year;  
 And so God save the Regent, Church, and  
 King!  
 Which means that I like all and everything.

<sup>1</sup>Scarf for neck and shoulders.<sup>2</sup>Song birds, particularly the garden warbler.<sup>3</sup>Italian sculptor (1757-1822).<sup>4</sup>Cowper, *The Task*, Bk. II, l. 206.



49

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,<sup>385</sup>  
 Poor's rate, Reform, my own, the nation's  
 debt,

Our little riots just to show we're free men,  
 Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,  
 Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,  
 All these I can forgive, and those forget,  
 And greatly venerate our recent glories,<sup>391</sup>  
 And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

50

But to my tale of Laura—for I find,—  
 Digression is a sin, that by degrees  
 Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,<sup>395</sup>  
 And, therefore, may the reader too dis-  
 please—

The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,  
 And caring little for the author's ease,  
 Insist on knowing what he means, a hard  
 And hapless situation for a bard.<sup>400</sup>

51

Oh, that I had the art of easy writing  
 What should be easy reading! could I scale  
 Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing  
 Those pretty poems never known to fail,  
 How quickly would I print (the world delight-  
 ing)<sup>405</sup>  
 A Grecian, Syrian, or Assyrian tale;  
 And sell you, mixed with western sentiment-  
 alism,  
 Some samples of the *finest Orientalism*.<sup>1</sup>

52

But I am but a nameless sort of person,  
 (A broken Dandy lately on my travels<sup>2</sup>)<sup>410</sup>  
 And take for rime, to hook my rambling  
 verse on,  
 The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,  
 And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,  
 Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils;  
 I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,<sup>415</sup>  
 But verse is more in fashion—so here goes!

53

The Count and Laura made their new arrange-  
 ment,  
 Which lasted, as arrangements sometimes  
 do,  
 For half a dozen years without estrangement;  
 They had their little differences, too;<sup>420</sup>  
 Those jealous whiffs, which never any change  
 meant;

In such affairs there probably are few

<sup>1</sup>This, of course, Byron had done immediately after the success of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*.

<sup>2</sup>The allusion is to *Childe Harold*.

Who have not had this pouting sort of  
 squabble,  
 From sinners of high station to the rabble.

54

But, on the whole, they were a happy pair,<sup>425</sup>  
 As happy as unlawful love could make them;  
 The gentleman was fond, the lady fair,  
 Their chains so slight, 'twas not worth while  
 to break them;  
 The world beheld them with indulgent air;  
 The pious only wished "the devil take  
 them!"<sup>430</sup>  
 He took them not; he very often waits,  
 And leaves old sinners to be young ones' baits.

55

But they were young: Oh! what without our  
 youth  
 Would love be! What would youth be  
 without love!  
 Youth lends its joy, and sweetness, vigor,  
 truth,<sup>435</sup>  
 Heart, soul, and all that seems as from  
 above;  
 But, languishing with years, it grows un-  
 couth—  
 One of few things experience don't improve,  
 Which is, perhaps, the reason why old fellows  
 Are always so preposterously jealous.<sup>440</sup>

56

It was the Carnival, as I have said  
 Some six and thirty stanzas back, and so  
 Laura the usual preparations made,  
 Which you do when your mind's made up to  
 go  
 To-night to Mrs. Boehm's masquerade,<sup>3</sup><sup>445</sup>  
 Spectator, or partaker in the show;  
 The only difference known between the cases  
 Is—*here*, we have six weeks of "varnished  
 faces."<sup>4</sup>

57

Laura, when dressed, was (as I sang before)  
 A pretty woman as was ever seen,<sup>450</sup>  
 Fresh as the Angel o'er a new inn door,  
 Or frontispiece of a new Magazine,  
 With all the fashions which the last month  
 wore,  
 Colored, and silver paper leaved between  
 That and the title-page, for fear the press<sup>455</sup>  
 Should soil with parts of speech the parts of  
 dress.

<sup>3</sup>This event was reported in the *Morning Chronicle* of 17 June, 1817. "On Monday evening this distinguished lady of the *haut ton* gave a splendid masquerade at her residence in St. James's Square," etc.

<sup>4</sup>I. e., of masking.

58

They went to the Ridotto;—'tis a hall  
 Where people dance, and sup, and dance  
 again;  
 Its proper name, perhaps, were a masked ball,  
 But that's of no importance to my strain;  
 'Tis (on a smaller scale) like our Vauxhall, <sup>461</sup>  
 Excepting that it can't be spoiled by rain;  
 The company is "mixed" (the phrase I quote  
 is  
 As much as saying they're below your notice);

59

For a "mixed company" implies that, save <sup>465</sup>  
 Yourself and friends, and half a hundred  
 more,  
 Whom you may bow to without looking grave,  
 The rest are but a vulgar set, the bore  
 Of public places, where they basely brave  
 The fashionable stare of twenty score <sup>470</sup>  
 Of well-bred persons, called "*The World*";  
 but I,  
 Although I know them, really don't know  
 why.

60

This is the case in England; at least was  
 During the dynasty of Dandies,<sup>1</sup> now  
 Perchance succeeded by some other class <sup>475</sup>  
 Of imitated imitators:—how  
 Irreparably soon decline, alas!  
 The demagogues of fashion: all below  
 Is frail, how easily the world is lost  
 By love, or war, and, now and then—by  
 frost! <sup>480</sup>

61

Crushed was Napoleon by the northern Thor,<sup>2</sup>  
 Who knocked his army down with icy  
 hammer,  
 Stopped by the *elements*, like a whaler, or  
 A blundering novice in his new French  
 grammar; <sup>484</sup>  
 Good cause had he to doubt the chance of war,  
 And as for Fortune—but I dare not d—n  
 her,  
 Because, were I to ponder to infinity,  
 The more I should believe in her divinity.

62

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,  
 She gives us luck in lotteries, love, and mar-  
 riage; <sup>490</sup>  
 I cannot say that she's done much for me yet;  
 Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,

<sup>1</sup>It extended from about 1813 to 1830. Cf. Bk. III, chaps. ix–x, of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, and notes, below.

<sup>2</sup>I. e., in his Russian campaign and disastrous winter retreat from Moscow.

We've not yet closed accounts, and we shall  
 see yet  
 How much she'll make amends for past  
 miscarriage;  
 Meantime the Goddess I'll no more impor-  
 tune, <sup>495</sup>  
 Unless to thank her when she's made my for-  
 tune.

63

To turn,—and to return;—the devil take it!  
 This story slips for ever through my fingers,  
 Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,  
 It needs must be, and so it rather lingers:  
 This form of verse began, I can't well break  
 it, <sup>501</sup>  
 But must keep time and tune like public  
 singers;  
 But if I once get through my present measure,  
 I'll take another when I'm next at leisure.

64

They went to the Ridotto ('tis a place <sup>505</sup>  
 To which I mean to go myself to-morrow,  
 Just to divert my thoughts a little space,  
 Because I'm rather hippish,<sup>3</sup> and may  
 borrow  
 Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face  
 May lurk beneath each mask; and as my  
 sorrow <sup>510</sup>  
 Slackens its pace sometimes, I'll make, or  
 find,  
 Something shall leave it half an hour behind).

65

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,  
 Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her  
 lips; <sup>514</sup>  
 To some she whispers, others speaks aloud;  
 To some she curtsies, and to some she dips,  
 Complains of warmth, and this complaint  
 avowed,  
 Her lover brings the lemonade, she sips;  
 She then surveys, condemns, but pities still  
 Her dearest friends for being dressed so ill. <sup>520</sup>

66

One has false curls, another too much paint,  
 A third—where did she buy that frightful  
 turban?  
 A fourth's so pale she fears she's going to faint,  
 A fifth's look's vulgar, dowdyish, and sub-  
 urban,  
 A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint, <sup>525</sup>  
 A seventh's thin muslin surely will be her  
 bane,

<sup>3</sup>Colloquial, for hypochondriac.

And lo! an eighth appears,—“I’ll see no more!”  
For fear, like Banquo’s kings,<sup>1</sup> they reach a score.

67

Meantime, while she was thus at others gazing,  
Others were leveling their looks at her;  
She heard the men’s half-whispered mode of praising,  
And, till ’twas done, determined not to stir;

The women only thought it quite amazing  
That, at her time of life, so many were Admirers still,—but “Men are so debased,”<sup>531</sup>  
Those brazen creatures always suit their taste.”

68

For my part, now, I ne’er could understand  
Why naughty women—but I won’t discuss  
A thing which is a scandal to the land,  
I only don’t see why it should be thus;<sup>540</sup>  
And if I were but in a gown and band,  
Just to entitle me to make a fuss,  
I’d preach on this till Wilberforce and Romilly<sup>2</sup>  
Should quote in their next speeches from my homily.

69

While Laura thus was seen, and seeing, smiling,<sup>545</sup>  
Talking, she knew not why, and cared not what,  
So that her female friends, with envy broiling,  
Beheld her airs and triumph, and all that;  
And well-dressed males still kept before her filing,  
And passing bowed and mingled with her chat;<sup>550</sup>  
More than the rest one person seemed to stare  
With pertinacity that’s rather rare.

70

He was a Turk, the color of mahogany;  
And Laura saw him, and at first was glad,  
Because the Turks so much admire philogyny,<sup>3</sup>  
Although their usage of their wives is sad;  
’Tis said they use no better than a dog any  
Poor woman, whom they purchase like a pad;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Macbeth*, IV, i.

<sup>2</sup>William Wilberforce (1759–1833), statesman and supporter of the anti-slavery cause, and Sir Samuel Romilly (1757–1818), philanthropist and criminal-law reformer.

<sup>3</sup>Fondness for women.

<sup>4</sup>An easy-paced horse.

They have a number, though they ne’er exhibit ’em,  
Four wives by law, and concubines “ad libitum.”<sup>55</sup>

560

71

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them daily,  
They scarcely can behold their male relations,  
So that their moments do not pass so gaily  
As is supposed the case with northern nations;  
Confinement, too, must make them look quite palely;<sup>565</sup>  
And as the Turks abhor long conversations,  
Their days are either passed in doing nothing,  
Or bathing, nursing, making love, and clothing.

72

They cannot read, and so don’t lisp in criticism;  
Nor write, and so they don’t affect the muse;<sup>570</sup>  
Were never caught in epigram or witticism,  
Have no romances, sermons, plays, reviews,—  
In harems learning soon would make a pretty schism;  
But luckily these beauties are no “Blues”;<sup>5</sup>  
No bustling *Botherby*<sup>7</sup> have they to show ’em<sup>575</sup>  
“That charming passage in the last new poem”:

73

No solemn, antique gentleman of rime,  
Who having angled all his life for fame,  
And getting but a nibble at a time,  
Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same<sup>580</sup>  
Small “Triton of the minnows,” the sublime  
Of mediocrity, the furious tame,  
The echo’s echo, usher of the school  
Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool!

74

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,<sup>585</sup>  
The approving “Good!” (by no means GOOD in law),  
Humming like flies around the newest blaze,  
The bluest of bluebottles you e’er saw,

<sup>5</sup>As many as they please.

<sup>6</sup>Bluestockings, literary or learned ladies.

<sup>7</sup>This stands for William Sotheby (1757–1833), a poet and patron of men of letters. Byron had mentioned him with approbation in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, but later disliked him because he thought Sotheby had anonymously attacked his poetry. His final conclusion about Sotheby, however, was, “a good man, rimes well (if not wisely); but is a bore.”



Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,  
Gorging the little fame he gets all raw, 590  
Translating tongues he knows not even by  
letter,  
And sweating plays so middling, bad were  
better.

75

One hates an author that's *all author*, fellows  
In foolscap uniforms turned up with ink,  
So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous, 595  
One don't know what to say to them, or  
think,  
Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows;  
Of coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the  
pink  
Are preferable to these shreds of paper,  
These unquenched snuffings of the midnight  
taper. 600

76

Of these same we see several, and of others,  
Men of the world, who know the world like  
men,  
Scott, Rogers,<sup>1</sup> Moore, and all the better  
brothers,  
Who think of something else besides the  
pen; 604  
But for the children of the "mighty mother's,"  
The would-be wits, and can't-be gentlemen,  
I leave them to their daily "tea is ready,"  
Smug coterie, and literary lady.

77

The poor dear Mussulwomen<sup>2</sup> whom I mention  
Have none of these instructive pleasant  
people, 610  
And *one* would seem to them a new invention,  
Unknown as bells within a Turkish steeple;  
I think 'twould almost be worth while to  
pension  
(Though best-sown projects very often reap  
ill)  
A missionary author, just to preach 615  
Our Christian usage of the parts of speech.

78

No chemistry for them unfolds her gases,  
No metaphysics are let loose in lectures,  
No circulating library amasses  
Religious novels, moral tales, and stric-  
tures 620  
Upon the living manners, as they pass us;  
No exhibition glares with annual pictures;  
They stare not on the stars from out their  
attics,  
Nor deal (thank God for that!) in mathe-  
matics. 624

79

Why I thank God for that is no great matter,  
I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,  
And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,  
I'll keep them for my life (to come) in  
prose;  
I fear I have a little turn for satire, 629  
And yet methinks the older that one grows  
Inclines us more to laugh than scold, though  
laughter  
Leave us so doubly serious shortly after.

80

Oh, mirth and innocence! Oh, milk and water!  
Ye happy mixtures of more happy days!  
In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter, 635  
Abominable Man no more allays  
His thirst with such pure beverage. No mat-  
ter,  
I love you both, and both shall have my  
praise: 638  
Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy!<sup>3</sup>—  
Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

81

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,  
Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,  
Which seems to say, "Madam, I do you honor,  
And while I please to stare, you'll please to  
stay." 644  
Could staring win a woman, this had won her,  
But Laura could not thus be led astray;  
She had stood fire too long and well, to boggle  
Even at this stranger's most outlandish ogle.

82

The morning now was on the point of break-  
ing,  
A turn of time at which I would advise 650  
Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking  
In any other kind of exercise,  
To make their preparations for forsaking  
The ball-room ere the sun begins to rise,  
Because when once the lamps and candles fail,  
His blushes make them look a little pale. 656

83

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,  
And stayed them over for some silly reason,  
And then I looked (I hope it was no crime)  
To see what lady best stood out the season,  
And though I've seen some thousands in their  
prime, 661  
Lovely and pleasing, and who still may  
please on,

<sup>3</sup>Saturn (or Cornus) was a Titan and his reign, which lasted until he was displaced by his son Zeus, coincided with the Golden Age of innocence, peace, and plenty.

<sup>1</sup>Samuel Rogers, banker and poet (1763-1855).

<sup>2</sup>Mahometan women.

I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn)  
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the  
dawn.

84

The name of this Aurora I'll not mention, 665  
Although I might, for she was nought to me  
More than that patent work of God's inven-  
tion,

A charming woman, whom we like to see;  
But writing names would merit reprehension,  
Yet if you like to find out this fair *she*, 670  
At the next London or Parisian ball  
You still may mark her cheek out-blooming  
all.

85

Laura, who knew it would not do at all  
To meet the daylight after seven hours'  
sitting  
Among three thousand people at a ball, 675  
To make her curtsy thought it right and  
fitting;  
The Count was at her elbow with her shawl,  
And they the room were on the point of  
quitting,  
When lo! those curséd gondoliers had got 679  
Just in the very place where they *should not*.

86

In this they're like our coachmen, and the  
cause  
Is much the same—the crowd, and pulling,  
hauling,  
With blasphemies enough to break their jaws,  
They make a never intermitted bawling.  
At home, our Bow-street gemmen<sup>1</sup> keep the  
laws, 685  
And here a sentry stands within your call-  
ing;  
But for all that, there is a deal of swearing,  
And nauseous words past mentioning or bear-  
ing.

87

The Count and Laura found their boat at last,  
And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,  
Discussing all the dances gone and past; 691  
The danciers and their dresses, too, beside;  
Some little scandals eke; but all aghast  
(As to their palace-stairs the rowers glide)  
Sat Laura by the side of her adorer, 695  
When lo! the Mussulman was there before her.

88

"Sir," said the Count, with brow exceeding  
grave,  
"Your unexpected presence here will make  
It necessary for myself to crave 699

<sup>1</sup>Cockney "gentlemen."

Its import? But perhaps 'tis a mistake;  
I hope it is so; and, at once to waive  
All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake;  
You understand my meaning, or you *shall*."  
"Sir" (quoth the Turk), "'tis no mistake at  
all: 704

89

"That lady is *my wife*!" Much wonder paints  
The lady's changing cheek, as well it might;  
But where an Englishwoman sometimes  
faints,  
Italian females don't do so outright;  
They only call a little on their saints,  
And then come to themselves, almost or  
quite; 710  
Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and  
sprinkling faces,  
And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

90

She said,—what could she say? Why, not a  
word;  
But the Count courteously invited in  
The stranger, much appeased by what he  
heard: 715  
"Such things, perhaps, we'd best discuss  
within,"  
Said he; "don't let us make ourselves ab-  
surd  
In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,  
For then the chief and only satisfaction  
Will be much quizzing on the whole trans-  
action." 720

91

They entered, and for coffee called—it came,  
A beverage for Turks and Christians both,  
Although the way they make it's not the  
same.  
Now Laura, much recovered, or less loath  
To speak, cries "Beppo! what's your pagan  
name? 725  
Bless me! your beard is of amazing growth!  
And how came you to keep away so long?  
Are you not sensible 'twas very wrong?"

92

"And are you *really, truly*, now a Turk?  
With any other women did you wive? 730  
Is't true they use their fingers for a fork?  
Well, that's the prettiest shawl—as I'm  
alive!  
You'll give it me? They say you eat no pork.  
And how so many years did you contrive  
To—Bless me! did I ever? No, I never 735  
Saw a man grown so yellow! How's your  
liver?"

93

"Beppo! that beard of yours becomes you not;

It shall be shaved before you're a day older:

Why do you wear it? Oh! I had forgot—

Pray don't you think the weather here is colder? 740

How do I look? You sha'n't stir from this spot

In that queer dress, for fear that some beholder

Should find you out, and make the story known.

How short your hair is! Lord! how gray it's grown!" 744

94

What answer Beppo made to these demands

Is more than I know. He was cast away About where Troy stood once, and nothing

stands;

Became a slave of course, and for his pay Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands

Of pirates landing in a neighboring bay,

He joined the rogues and prospered, and became 751

A renegade of indifferent fame.

95

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew so

Keen the desire to see his home again, 754

He thought himself in duty bound to do so,

And not be always thieving on the main;<sup>1</sup>

Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,

And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,

Bound for Corfu: she was a fine polacca,<sup>2</sup>

Manned with twelve hands, and laden with tobacco. 760

96

Himself, and much (Heaven knows how gotten!) cash,

He then embarked, with risk of life and limb,

And got clear off, although the attempt was rash;

He said that *Providence* protected him— 764

For my part, I say nothing—lest we clash

In our opinions:—well, the ship was trim, Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,

Except three days of calm when off Cape Bonn.<sup>3</sup>

97

They reached the island, he transferred his lading 769

And self and live stock to another bottom,

And passed for a true Turkey-merchant, trading

With goods of various names, but I've forgot 'em.

However, he got off by this evading,

Or else the people would perhaps have shot him;

And thus at Venice landed to reclaim 775

His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

98

His wife received, the Patriarch re-baptized him

(He made the church a present, by the way);

He then threw off the garments which disguised him,

And borrowed the Count's smallclothes for a day: 780

His friends the more for his long absence prized him,

Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,

With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of them,

For stories—but *I* don't believe the half of them. 784

99

Whate'er his youth had suffered, his old age

With wealth and talking made him some amends;

Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,

I've heard the Count and he were always friends.

My pen is at the bottom of a page, 789

Which being finished, here the story ends:

'Tis to be wished it had been sooner done, But stories somehow lengthen when begun.

<sup>1</sup>On the high seas.

<sup>2</sup>Three-masted merchant vessel of the Mediterranean.

<sup>3</sup>The northernmost point of Tunis.



DON JUAN<sup>1</sup>

## CANTO III

## THE ISLES OF GREECE

## I

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!

Where burning Sappho loved and sung,

Where grew the arts of war and peace,

Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!<sup>2</sup>

Eternal summer gilds them yet,

But all, except their sun, is set.

## II

The Scian and the Teian muse,<sup>3</sup>

The hero's harp, the lover's lute,

Have found the fame your shores refuse:

Their place of birth alone is mute

To sounds which echo further west

Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Written at intervals from 1818 to 1823 and published in 1819-1824, save for a fragment—the unfinished seventeenth canto—published in 1903. Byron took the name of his hero from a Spanish traditional story concerning the libertinism of one Don Juan Tenorio. But he took little more than the name, practically disregarding both the original Spanish dramatization of the story and the later French and Italian adaptations. When he had finished the first canto Byron wrote to Moore that his new poem was "meant to be a little quietly facetious upon everything." It was that—and more. For, as Byron went on, the work grew upon him and developed into a satirical picture of European aristocracy and politics. When he had completed the fifth canto he wrote to Murray, his publisher: "The 5th is so far from being the last of *D. J.* that it is hardly the beginning. I meant to take him the tour of Europe, with a proper mixture of siege, battle, and adventure, and to make him finish as Anacharsis Cloots in the French Revolution [who was executed in 1794]. To how many cantos this may extend, I know not, nor whether (even if I live) I shall complete it; but this was my notion: I meant to have him a Cavalier Servente in Italy, and a cause for a divorce in England, and a Sentimental "Werther-faced man" in Germany, so as to show the different ridicules of the society in each of those countries, and to have displayed him gradually *gâté* and *blâsé* [growing tainted and dulled] as he grew older, as is natural. But I had not quite fixed whether to make him end in Hell, or in an unhappy marriage, not knowing which would be the severest. The Spanish tradition says Hell; but it is probably only an Allegory of the other state." In pursuance of this sufficiently elastic plan Byron wrote sixteen cantos, and had begun a seventeenth before he died, leaving the poem unfinished. The passages from the third and fourth cantos here printed are not sufficient to give any fair idea of the variety, the buoyancy, the largeness and force, and the human truth of *Don Juan*. They are justly famous passages, however, and within their limits may at least serve to illustrate some of the salient characteristics of the poem.

<sup>2</sup>Delos was said to have risen from the waves of the Ægean and to have been the birthplace of Phœbus Apollo.

<sup>3</sup>Homer, said to have been born on the island of Scio, and Anacreon, in Teos, Asia Minor.

<sup>4</sup>Mythical islands said to lie in the "Western Ocean," where those favored of the gods dwelt in happiness after death.

## III

The mountains look on Marathon<sup>5</sup>—

And Marathon looks on the sea;

And musing there an hour alone,

I dreamed that Greece might still be free;

For standing on the Persians' grave,

I could not deem myself a slave.

## IV

A king<sup>6</sup> sat on the rocky brow

Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;

And ships, by thousands, lay below,

And men in nations;—all were his!

He counted them at break of day—

And when the sun set where were they?

## V

And where are they? and where art thou,

My country? On thy voiceless shore

The heroic lay is tuneless now—

The heroic bosom beats no more!

And must thy lyre, so long divine,

Degenerate into hands like mine?

## VI

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,

Though linked among a fettered race,

To feel at least a patriot's shame,

Even as I sing, suffuse my face;

For what is left the poet here?

For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

## VII

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?

Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.

Earth! render back from out thy breast

A remnant of our Spartan dead!

Of the three hundred grant but three,

To make a new Thermopylæ!<sup>7</sup>

## VIII

What, silent still? and silent all?

Ah! no;—the voices of the dead

Sound like a distant torrent's fall,

And answer, "Let one living head,

But one arise,—we come, we come!"

'Tis but the living who are dumb.

<sup>5</sup>The plain where the Greeks under Miltiades defeated the Persians.

<sup>6</sup>Xerxes, King of Persia, whose fleet was defeated by the Greeks in the battle of Salamis.

<sup>7</sup>The mountain pass where three hundred Spartans heroically opposed the advance of Xerxes' army.

## IX

In vain—in vain: strike other chords;  
 Fill high the cup with Samian wine!<sup>1</sup> 50  
 Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,  
 And shed the blood of Scio's vine!  
 Hark! rising to the ignoble call—  
 How answers each bold Bacchanal!

## X

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet; 55  
 Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?<sup>2</sup>  
 Of two such lessons, why forget  
 The nobler and the manlier one?  
 You have the letters Cadmus<sup>3</sup> gave—  
 Think ye he meant them for a slave? 60

## XI

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!  
 We will not think of themes like these!  
 It made Anacreon's song divine:  
 He served—but served Polycrates—  
 A tyrant; but our masters then 65  
 Were still, at least, our countrymen.

## XII

The tyrant of the Chersonese  
 Was freedom's best and bravest friend;  
*That* tyrant was Miltiades!  
 Oh! that the present hour would lend 70  
 Another despot of the kind!  
 Such chains as his were sure to bind.

## XIII

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!  
 On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,<sup>4</sup>  
 Exists the remnant of a line 75  
 Such as the Doric mothers bore;  
 And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,  
 The Heracleidan blood<sup>5</sup> might own.

## XIV

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—  
 They have a king who buys and sells; 80  
 In native swords, and native ranks,  
 The only hope of courage dwells:  
 But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,  
 Would break your shield, however broad.

## XV

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine! 85  
 Our virgins dance beneath the shade—

I see their glorious black eyes shine;  
 But gazing on each glowing maid,  
 My own the burning tear-drop laves,  
 To think such breasts must suckle slaves. 90

## XVI

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,  
 Where nothing, save the waves and I,  
 May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;  
 There, swan-like, let me sing and die:  
 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine— 95  
 Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

## 87

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should have sung,  
 \* The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;<sup>6</sup>  
 If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was young,  
 Yet in these times he might have done  
 much worse: 100  
 His strain displayed some feeling—right or wrong;  
 And feeling, in a poet, is the source  
 Of others' feeling; but they are such liars,  
 And take all colors—like the hands of dyers.

## 88

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,  
 Falling like dew, upon a thought, produces  
 That which makes thousands, perhaps mil-  
 lions, think; 107  
 'Tis strange, the shortest letter which man  
 uses  
 Instead of speech, may form a lasting link  
 Of ages; to what straits old Time reduces 110  
 Frail man, when paper—even a rag like this,  
 Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's his!

## 89

And when his bones are dust, his grave a blank,  
 His station, generation, even his nation,  
 Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank 115  
 In chronological commemoration,  
 Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,  
 Or graven stone found in a barrack's station  
 In digging the foundation of a closet,  
 May turn his name up, as a rare deposit. 120

<sup>1</sup>Anacreon, the poet of love and wine, lived at Samos.

<sup>2</sup>The former an ancient war dance, the latter a military formation used by Pyrrhus.

<sup>3</sup>A legendary figure reputed to have introduced the alphabet into Greece from Phœnicia.

<sup>4</sup>Places in Albania.

<sup>5</sup>The blood of Hercules.

<sup>6</sup>Juan, surviving shipwreck, had found himself on an island where lived Haidée, the daughter of a pirate, Lambro, who then was at sea. Juan and Haidée had fallen in love with each other and, supposing Lambro dead, were expending his treasures in feasting and revelry. One of Haidée's retinue was a poet, who is described in stanzas immediately preceding *The Isles of Greece*, and who "thus sung, or would, or could, or should have sung."

90

And glory long has made the sages smile;  
'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion,  
wind—

Depending more upon the historian's style  
Than on the name a person leaves behind:  
Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to  
Hoyle.<sup>1</sup> 125

The present century was growing blind  
To the great Marlborough's skill in giving  
knocks,  
Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.<sup>2</sup>

91

Milton's the prince of poets—so we say;  
A little heavy, but no less divine: 130  
An independent being in his day—  
Learned, pious, temperate in love and wine;  
But his life falling into Johnson's way,<sup>3</sup>  
We're told this great high priest of all the  
Nine<sup>4</sup>  
Was whipped at college—a harsh sire—odd  
spouse, 135  
For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

92

All these are, *certainly*, entertaining facts,  
Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord  
Bacon's bribes;  
Like Titus's<sup>5</sup> youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts;  
Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well  
describes); 140  
Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although truth  
exacts  
These amiable descriptions from the scribes,  
As most essential to their hero's story,  
They do not much contribute to his glory.

93

All are not moralists, like Southey, when 145  
He prated to the world of "Pantisocracy";<sup>6</sup>  
Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who  
then  
Seasoned his peddler poems with democ-  
racy;  
Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen  
Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy; 150

<sup>1</sup>Edmund Hoyle (1672-1769).

<sup>2</sup>William Coxe (1747-1828), published his *Life* of the victor of Blenheim in 1817-1819.

<sup>3</sup>When Johnson was writing his *Lives of the English Poets*.

<sup>4</sup>The Nine Muses.

<sup>5</sup>Titus Vespasianus, who as a youth learned the art of forgery.

<sup>6</sup>See the introductory note prefixed to Coleridge's poems, above. Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge all were believers in democracy in their youth but became more conservative in their views as they grew older.

When he and Southey, following the same  
path,  
Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

94

Such names at present cut a convict figure,  
The very Botany Bay<sup>7</sup> in moral geography;  
Their loyal treason, renegado rigor, 155  
Are good manure for their more bare biog-  
raphy;  
Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is big-  
ger  
Than any since the birthday of typography;  
A drowsy, frowsy poem, called the "Excur-  
sion,"  
Writ in a manner which is my aversion. 160

95

He there builds up a formidable dyke  
Between his own and others' intellect;  
But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers,  
like  
Joanna Southcote's Shiloh<sup>8</sup> and her sect,  
Are things which in this century don't strike  
The public mind,—so few are the elect; 166  
And the new births of both their stale virgin-  
ities  
Have proved but dropsies, taken for divini-  
ties.

96

But let me to my story: I must own,  
If I have any fault, it is digression, 170  
Leaving my people to proceed alone,  
While I soliloquize beyond expression:  
But these are my addresses from the throne,  
Which put off business to the ensuing ses-  
sion:  
Forgetting each omission is a loss to 175  
The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

97

I know that what our neighbors call "*longueurs*,"<sup>9</sup>  
(We've not so good a *word*, but have the  
*thing*,  
In that complete perfection which insures 179  
An epic from Bob Southey every spring—)  
Form not the true temptation which allures  
The reader; but 'twould not be hard to  
bring  
Some fine examples of the *épopée*,<sup>10</sup>  
To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

<sup>7</sup>Australian penal colony.

<sup>8</sup>She had prophesied that on 19 October, 1814, she would give birth to a second Shilo, or Messiah. This she failed to do, and shortly afterwards she died of dropsy.

<sup>9</sup>Tedious things.

<sup>10</sup>Epic poem.



98

We learn from Horace, "Homer sometimes sleeps";<sup>1</sup> 185

We learn without him,—Wordsworth sometimes wakes,—

To show with what complacency he creeps,  
With his dear "Wagoners," around his lakes.

He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps—  
Of ocean?—No, of air; and then he makes

Another outcry for "a little boat,"<sup>2</sup> 191  
And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

99

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,  
And Pegasus runs restive in his "Wagon,"  
Could he not beg the loan of Charles's

Wain?<sup>3</sup> 195

Or pray Medea for a single dragon?

Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,

He feared his neck to venture such a nag on,

And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,  
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon? 200

100

"Peddlers," and "Boats," and "Wagons"!

Oh! ye shades

Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?

That trash of such sort not alone evades

Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss  
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack

Cades 205

Of sense and song above your graves may  
hiss—

The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"

Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel"!

101

T' our tale.—The feast was over, the slaves  
gone, 209

The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired;

The Arab lore and poet's song were done,

And every sound of revelry expired,

The lady and her lover, left alone,

The rosy flood of twilight's sky admired;—

Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea, 215

That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest  
thee!

102

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!

The time, the clime, the spot, where I so  
oft

Have felt that moment in its fullest power

Sink o'er the earth, so beautiful and soft, 220

<sup>1</sup>*Ars Poetica*, l. 359.

<sup>2</sup>See the opening stanza of *Peter Bell*.

<sup>3</sup>Charles's wagon, the constellation also known as the Dipper.

While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,  
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,  
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,  
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with  
prayer.

103

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer! 225

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of love!

Ave Maria! may our spirits dare

Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!

Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!

Those downcast eyes beneath the Almighty

Dove— 230

What though 'tis but a pictured image?—  
strike—

That painting is no idol,—'tis too like.

104

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,

In nameless print—that I have no devo-  
tion; 234

But set those persons down with me to pray,

And you shall see who has the properest  
notion

Of getting into heaven the shortest way;

My altars are the mountains and the ocean,

Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from the  
great Whole, 239

Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.

105

Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude

Of the pine forest, and the silent shore

Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,

Rooted where once the Adrian wave flowed  
o'er,

To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood, 245

Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore

And Dryden's lay<sup>4</sup> made haunted ground to  
me,

How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

106

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,

Making their summer lives one ceaseless  
song, 250

Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and  
mine,

And vesper bell's that rose the boughs  
along;

The specter huntsman of Onesti's<sup>5</sup> line,

His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair  
throng

Which learned from this example not to fly 255

From a true lover,—shadowed my mind's eye.

<sup>4</sup>Dryden's *Theodore and Honoria* is an adaptation of the eighth tale of the fifth day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

<sup>5</sup>Dryden's *Theodore* is Boccaccio's Onesti.

107

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things—  
 Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,  
 To the young bird the parent's brooding  
 wings, 259  
 The welcome stall to the o'erlabored steer;  
 Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone  
 clings,  
 Whate'er our household gods protect of  
 dear,  
 Are gathered round us by thy look of rest;  
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's  
 breast.

108

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts  
 the heart 265  
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day  
 When they from their sweet friends are torn  
 apart;  
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way  
 As the far bell of vesper makes him start,  
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay; 270  
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?  
 Ah! surely nothing dies but something  
 mourns!

## CANTO IV

12

"WHOM the gods love die young" was said of  
 yore,<sup>1</sup>  
 And many deaths do they escape by this:  
 The death of friends, and that which slays  
 even more—  
 The death of friendship, love, youth, all  
 that is,  
 Except mere breath; and since the silent  
 shore 5  
 Awaits at last even those who longest miss  
 The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early  
 grave  
 Which men weep over may be meant to save.

13

Haidée and Juan thought not of the dead.  
 The heavens, and earth, and air, seemed  
 made for them: 10  
 They found no fault with Time, save that he  
 fled;  
 They saw not in themselves aught to con-  
 demn;  
 Each was the other's mirror, and but read  
 Joy sparkling in their dark eyes like a gem,  
 And knew such brightness was but the re-  
 flection 15  
 Of their exchanging glances of affection.

<sup>1</sup>The statement is found among the fragments of Menander, in Plautus's *Bacchides*, IV, vii, 18-19, and elsewhere.

14

The gentle pressure, and the thrilling touch,  
 The least glance better understood than  
 words,  
 Which still said all, and ne'er could say too  
 much;  
 A language, too, but like to that of birds, 20  
 Known but to them, at least appearing such  
 As but to lovers a true sense affords;  
 Sweet playful phrases, which would seem  
 absurd  
 To those who have ceased to hear such, or  
 ne'er heard.

15

All these were theirs, for they were children  
 still, 25  
 And children still they should have ever  
 been;  
 They were not made in the real world to fill  
 A busy character in the dull scene,  
 But like two beings born from out a rill,  
 A nymph and her belovéd, all unseen 30  
 To pass their lives in fountains and on flowers,  
 And never know the weight of human hours.

16

Moons changing had rolled on, and changeless  
 found  
 Those their bright rise had lighted to such  
 joys 34  
 As rarely they beheld throughout their round;  
 And these were not of the vain kind which  
 cloys,  
 For theirs were buoyant spirits, never bound  
 By the mere senses; and that which destroys  
 Most love, possession, unto them appeared  
 A thing which each endearment more en-  
 deared. 40

17

Oh beautiful! and rare as beautiful!  
 But theirs was love in which the mind de-  
 lights  
 To lose itself, when the old world grows dull,  
 And we are sick of its hack sounds and  
 sights, 44  
 Intrigues, adventures of the common school,  
 Its petty passions, marriages, and flights,  
 Where Hymen's torch but brands one strum-  
 pet more,  
 Whose husband only knows her not a whore.

18

Hard words—harsh truth! a truth which  
 many know. 49  
 Enough.—The faithful and the fairy pair,

Who never found a single hour too slow,  
What was it made them thus exempt from  
care?

Young innate feelings all have felt below,  
Which perish in the rest, but in them were  
Inherent—what we mortals call romantic, 55  
And always envy, though we deem it frantic.

19

This is in others a factitious state,  
An opium dream of too much youth and  
reading,

But was in them their nature or their fate:  
No novels e'er had set their young hearts  
bleeding, 60

For Haidée's knowledge was by no means  
great,

And Juan was a boy of saintly breeding;  
So that there was no reason for their loves  
More than for those of nightingales or doves.

20

They gazed upon the sunset; 'tis an hour 65  
Dear unto all, but dearest to *their* eyes,  
For it had made them what they were: the  
power

Of love had first o'erwhelmed them from  
such skies,

When happiness had been their only dower,  
And twilight saw them linked in passion's  
ties; 70

Charmed with each other, all things charmed  
that brought

The past still welcome as the present thought.

21

I know not why, but in that hour to-night,  
Even as they gazed, a sudden tremor came,  
And swept, as 'twere, across their hearts'  
delight, 75

Like the wind o'er a harp-string, or a flame,  
When one is shook in sound, and one in sight.

And thus some boding flashed through  
either frame,

And called from Juan's breast a faint low sigh,  
While one new tear arose in Haidée's eye. 80

22

That large black prophet eye seemed to dilate  
And follow far the disappearing sun,  
As if their last day of a happy date

With his broad, bright, and dropping orb  
were gone.

Juan gazed on her as to ask his fate— 85

He felt a grief, but knowing cause for none,  
His glance inquired of hers for some excuse  
For feelings causeless, or at least abstruse.

23

She turned to him, and smiled, but in that sort  
Which makes not others smile; then turned  
aside: 90

Whatever feeling shook her, it seemed short,  
And mastered by her wisdom or her pride;

When Juan spoke, too—it might be in sport—  
Of this their mutual feeling, she replied—

"If it should be so,—but—it cannot be— 95  
Or I at least shall not survive to see."

24

Juan would question further, but she pressed  
His lips to hers, and silenced him with this,

And then dismissed the omen from her breast,  
Defying augury with that fond kiss; 100

And no doubt of all methods 'tis the best:  
Some people prefer wine—'tis not amiss;

I have tried both; so those who would a part  
take

May choose between the headache and the  
heartache.

25

One of the two, according to your choice, 105  
Woman or wine, you'll have to undergo;

Both maladies are taxes on our joys:  
But which to choose, I really hardly know;

And if I had to give a casting voice,  
For both sides I could many reasons show,

And then decide, without great wrong to  
either, 111

It were much better to have both than  
neither.

26

Juan and Haidée gazed upon each other  
With swimming looks of speechless tender-  
ness,

Which mixed all feelings, friend, child, lover,  
brother; 115

All that the best can mingle and express  
When two pure hearts are poured in one an-  
other,

And love too much, and yet cannot love less;  
But almost sanctify the sweet excess

By the immortal wish and power to bless. 120

27

Mixed in each other's arms, and heart in heart,  
Why did they not then die?—they had lived  
too long

Should an hour come to bid them breathe  
apart;

Years could but bring them cruel things or  
wrong;

The world was not for them, nor the world's  
art 125

For beings passionate as Sappho's song;



Love was born *with* them, *in* them, so intense,  
It was their very spirit—not a sense.

28

They should have lived together deep in  
woods, 129

Unseen as sings the nightingale; they were  
Unfit to mix in these thick solitudes

Called social, haunts of hate, and vice, and  
care;

How lonely every freeborn creature broods!

The sweetest song-birds nestle in a pair;  
The eagle soars alone; the gull and crow 135  
Flock o'er their carrion, just like men below.

29

Now pillowed cheek to cheek, in loving sleep,  
Haidée and Juan their siesta took,

A gentle slumber, but it was not deep,  
For ever and anon a something shook 140

Juan, and shuddering o'er his frame would  
creep;

And Haidée's sweet lips murmured like a  
brook

A wordless music, and her face so fair  
Stirred with her dream, as rose-leaves with the  
air.

30

Or as the stirring of a deep clear stream 145  
Within an Alpine hollow, when the wind

Walks o'er it, was she shaken by the dream,  
The mystical usurper of the mind—

O'erpowering us to be whate'er may seem  
Good to the soul which we no more can  
bind: 150

Strange state of being! (for 'tis still to be)  
Senseless to feel, and with sealed eyes to see.

31

She dreamed of being alone on the sea-shore,  
Chained to a rock; she knew not how, but  
stir 154

She could not from the spot, and the loud roar  
Grew, and each wave rose roughly, threat-  
ening her;

And o'er her upper lip they seemed to pour,  
Until she sobbed for breath, and soon they  
were

Foaming o'er her lone head, so fierce and  
high—

Each broke to drown her, yet she could not  
die. 160

32

Anon—she was released, and then she strayed  
O'er the sharp shingles with her bleeding  
feet,

And stumbled almost every step she made;  
And something rolled before her in a sheet,

Which she must still pursue howe'er afraid:

'Twas white and indistinct, nor stopped to  
meet 166

Her glance nor grasp, for still she gazed and  
grasped,

And ran, but it escaped her as she clasped.

33

The dream changed:—in a cave she stood, its  
walls

Were hung with marble icicles; the work 170  
Of ages on its water-fretted halls,

Where waves might wash, and seals might  
breed and lurk;

Her hair was dripping, and the very balls

Of her black eyes seemed turned to tears,  
and mirk

The sharp rocks looked below each drop they  
caught, 175

Which froze to marble as it fell,—she thought.

34

And wet, and cold, and lifeless at her feet,  
Pale as the foam that frothed on his dead  
brow,

Which she essayed in vain to clear (how sweet  
Were once her cares, how idle seemed they  
now!), 180

Lay Juan, nor could aught renew the beat  
Of his quenched heart; and the sea dirges  
low

Rang in her sad ears like a mermaid's song,  
And that brief dream appeared a life too long.

35

And gazing on the dead, she thought his  
face 185

Faded, or altered into something new—  
Like to her father's features, till each trace

More like and like to Lambro's aspect  
grew—

With all his keen worn look and Grecian  
grace; 189

And starting, she awoke, and what to view?  
Oh! Powers of Heaven! what dark eye meets  
she there?

'Tis—'tis her father's—fixed upon the pair!

36

Then shrieking, she arose, and shrieking fell,  
With joy and sorrow, hope and fear, to  
see 194

Him whom she deemed a habitant where dwell  
The ocean-buried, risen from death, to be

Perchance the death of one she loved too well:  
Dear as her father had been to Haidée,

It was a moment of that awful kind— 199  
I have seen such—but must not call to mind.

37

Up Juan sprang to Haidée's bitter shriek,  
 And caught her falling, and from off the wall  
 Snatched down his saber, in hot haste to  
 wreak  
 Vengeance on him who was the cause of all:  
 Then Lambro, who till now forebore to speak,  
 Smiled scornfully, and said, "Within my  
 call, 206  
 A thousand scimitars await the word;  
 Put up, young man, put up your silly sword."

38

And Haidée clung around him; "Juan, 'tis—  
 'Tis Lambro—'tis my father! Kneel with  
 me— 210  
 He will forgive us—yes—it must be—yes.  
 Oh! dearest father, in this agony  
 Of pleasure and of pain—even while I kiss  
 Thy garment's hem with transport, can it be  
 That doubt should mingle with my filial  
 joy? 215  
 Deal with me as thou wilt, but spare this  
 boy."

39

High and inscrutable the old man stood,  
 Calm in his voice, and calm within his eye—  
 Not always signs with him of calmest mood:  
 He looked upon her, but gave no reply; 220  
 Then turned to Juan, in whose cheek the blood  
 Oft came and went, as there resolved to die;  
 In arms, at least, he stood, in act to spring  
 On the first foe whom Lambro's call might  
 bring.

40

"Young man, your sword"; so Lambro once  
 more said: 225  
 Juan replied, "Not while this arm is free."  
 The old man's cheek grew pale, but not with  
 dread,  
 And drawing from his belt a pistol, he  
 Replied, "Your blood be then on your own  
 head."  
 Then looked close at the flint, as if to see 230  
 'Twas fresh—for he had lately used the lock—  
 And next proceeded quietly to cock.

41

It has a strange quick jar upon the ear,  
 That cocking of a pistol, when you know  
 A moment more will bring the sight to bear  
 Upon your person, twelve yards off, or  
 so; 236  
 A gentlemanly distance, not too near,  
 If you have got a former friend for foe;  
 But after being fired at once or twice,  
 The ear becomes more Irish, and less nice. 240

42

Lambro presented, and one instant more  
 Had stopped this Canto, and Don Juan's  
 breath,  
 When Haidée threw herself her boy before;  
 Stern as her sire: "On me," she cried, "let  
 death  
 Descend—the fault is mine; this fatal shore  
 He found—but sought not. I have pledged  
 my faith; 246  
 I love him—I will die with him: I knew  
 Your nature's firmness—know your daugh-  
 ter's too."

43

A minute past, and she had been all tears,  
 And tenderness, and infancy; but now 250  
 She stood as one who championed human  
 fears—  
 Pale, statue-like, and stern, she wooed the  
 blow;  
 And tall beyond her sex, and their compeers,  
 She drew up to her height, as if to show  
 A fairer mark; and with a fixed eye scanned  
 Her father's face—but never stopped his  
 hand. 256

44

He gazed on her, and she on him; 'twas strange  
 How like they looked! the expression was  
 the same;  
 Serenely savage, with a little change  
 In the large dark eye's mutual-darted  
 flame; 260  
 For she, too, was as one who could avenge,  
 If cause should be—a lioness, though tame.  
 Her father's blood before her father's face  
 Boiled up, and proved her truly of his race.

45

I said they were alike, their features and 265  
 Their stature, differing but in sex and years:  
 Even to the delicacy of their hand  
 There was resemblance, such as true blood  
 wears;  
 And now to see them, thus divided, stand  
 In fixed ferocity, when joyous tears 270  
 And sweet sensations should have welcomed  
 both,  
 Shows what the passions are in their full  
 growth.

46

The father paused a moment, then withdrew  
 His weapon, and replaced it; but stood still,  
 And looking on her, as to look her through, 275  
 "Not I," he said, "have sought this  
 stranger's ill;

Not I have made this desolation: few  
 Would bear such outrage, and forbear to  
 kill;  
 But I must do my duty—how thou hast 279  
 Done thine, the present vouches for the past.

47

“Let him disarm, or, by my father’s head,  
 His own shall roll before you like a ball!”  
 He raised his whistle as the word he said,  
 And blew; another answered to the call,  
 And rushing in disorderly, though led, 285  
 And armed from boot to turban, one and all,  
 Some twenty of his train came, rank on rank;  
 He gave the word, “Arrest or slay the Frank.”

48

Then, with a sudden movement, he withdrew  
 His daughter; while compressed within his  
 clasp, 290  
 ’Twixt her and Juan interposed the crew;  
 In vain she struggled in her father’s grasp—  
 His arms were like a serpent’s coil: then flew  
 Upon their prey, as darts an angry asp,  
 The file of pirates—save the foremost, who 295  
 Had fallen, with his right shoulder half cut  
 through.

49

The second had his cheek laid open; but  
 The third, a wary, cool old sworder, took  
 The blows upon his cutlass, and then put 299  
 His own well in; so well, ere you could look,  
 His man was floored, and helpless at his foot,  
 With the blood running like a little brook  
 From two smart saber gashes, deep and red—  
 One on the arm, the other on the head.

50

And then they bound him where he fell, and  
 bore 305  
 Juan from the apartment; with a sign  
 Old Lambro bade them take him to the shore,  
 Where lay some ships which were to sail at  
 nine.  
 They laid him in a boat, and plied the oar  
 Until they reached some galliots,<sup>1</sup> placed in  
 line; 310  
 On board of one of these, and under hatches,  
 They stowed him, with strict orders to the  
 watches.

51

The world is full of strange vicissitudes,  
 And here was one exceedingly unpleasant:  
 A gentleman so rich in the world’s goods, 315  
 Handsome and young, enjoying all the  
 present,

<sup>1</sup>Small swift galleys.

Just at the very time when he least broods  
 On such a thing, is suddenly to sea sent,  
 Wounded and chained, so that he cannot  
 move,  
 And all because a lady fell in love. 320

52

Here I must leave him, for I grow pathetic,  
 Moved by the Chinese nymph of tears,  
 green tea!  
 Than whom Cassandra was not more pro-  
 phetic;  
 For if my pure libations exceed three,  
 I feel my heart become so sympathetic, 325  
 That I must have recourse to black Bohea.<sup>2</sup>  
 ’Tis pity wine should be so deleterious,  
 For tea and coffee leave us much more serious,

53

Unless when qualified with thee, Cogniac!<sup>3</sup>  
 Sweet Naiad of the Phlegethontic rill!<sup>4</sup> 330  
 Ah! why the liver wilt thou thus attack,  
 And make, like other nymphs, thy lovers ill?  
 I would take refuge in weak punch, but *rack*  
 (In each sense<sup>5</sup> of the word), when’er I fill  
 My mild and midnight beakers to the brim,<sup>335</sup>  
 Wakes me next morning with its synonym.

54

I leave Don Juan for the present, safe—  
 Not sound, poor fellow, but severely  
 wounded;  
 Yet could his corporal pangs amount to half  
 Of those with which his Haidée’s bosom  
 bounded! 340  
 She was not one to weep, and rave, and chafe,  
 And then give way, subdued because sur-  
 rounded;  
 Her mother was a Moorish maid from Fez,  
 Where all is Eden, or a wilderness.

55

There the large olive rains its amber store 345  
 In marble fountains; there grain, and flour, and  
 fruit,  
 Gush from the earth until the land runs o’er;  
 But there, too, many a poison-tree has root,  
 And midnight listens to the lion’s roar,  
 And long, long deserts scorch the camel’s  
 foot, 350  
 Or heaving overwhelm the helpless caravan;  
 And as the soil is, so the heart of man.

<sup>2</sup>Another variety of tea.

<sup>3</sup>French brandy made from wine produced near the town of Cognac.

<sup>4</sup>Phlegethon: a river of Hades containing fire instead of water.

<sup>5</sup>*I. e.*, “punch” and “suffering.”



56

Afric is all the sun's, and as her earth  
 Her human clay is kindled; full of power  
 For good or evil, burning from its birth, 355  
 The Moorish blood partakes the planet's  
 hour,  
 And like the soil beneath it will bring forth:  
 Beauty and love were Haidée's mother's  
 dower;  
 But her large dark eye showed deep Passion's  
 force,  
 Though sleeping like a lion near a source. 360

57

Her daughter, tempered with a milder ray,  
 Like summer clouds all silvery, smooth,  
 and fair,  
 Till slowly charged with thunder they display  
 Terror to earth, and tempest to the air,  
 Had held till now her soft and milky way; 365  
 But overwrought with passion and despair,  
 The fire burst forth from her Numidian veins,  
 Even as the Simoom<sup>1</sup> sweeps the blasted  
 plains.

58

The last sight which she saw was Juan's gore,  
 And he himself o'ermastered and cut down;  
 His blood was running on the very floor 371  
 Where late he trod, her beautiful, her own;  
 Thus much she viewed an instant and no  
 more,—  
 Her struggles ceased with one convulsive  
 groan;  
 On her sire's arm, which until now scarce  
 held 375  
 Her writhing, fell she like a cedar felled.

59

A vein had burst, and her sweet lips' pure dyes  
 Were dabbled with the deep blood which ran  
 o'er;  
 And her head drooped, as when the lily lies  
 O'ercharged with rain: her summoned hand-  
 maids bore 380  
 Their lady to her couch with gushing eyes;  
 Of herbs and cordials they produced their  
 store,  
 But she defied all means they could employ,  
 Like one life could not hold, nor death de-  
 stroy.

60

Days lay she in that state unchanged, though  
 chill— 385  
 With nothing livid, still her lips were red;

<sup>1</sup>A dry, hot, violent, dust-laden wind.

She had no pulse, but death seemed absent  
 still;  
 No hideous sign proclaimed her surely dead;  
 Corruption came not in each mind to kill  
 All hope; to look upon her sweet face bred  
 New thoughts of life, for it seemed full of  
 soul— 391  
 She had so much, earth could not claim the  
 whole.

61

The ruling passion, such as marble shows  
 When exquisitely chiseled, still lay there,  
 But fixed as marble's unchanged aspect throws  
 O'er the fair Venus, but for ever fair; 396  
 O'er the Laocoön's all eternal throes,  
 And ever-dying Gladiator's air,  
 Their energy like life forms all their fame,  
 Yet looks not life, for they are still the same.

62

She woke at length, but not as sleepers wake,  
 Rather the dead, for life seemed something  
 new, 402  
 A strange sensation which she must partake  
 Perforce, since whatsoever met her view  
 Struck not on memory, though a heavy ache  
 Lay at her heart, whose earliest beat still  
 true 406  
 Brought back the sense of pain without the  
 cause,  
 For, for a while, the furies made a pause.

63

She looked on many a face with vacant eye,  
 On many a token without knowing what;  
 She saw them watch her without asking  
 why, 411  
 And recked not who around her pillow sat;  
 Not speechless, though she spoke not; not a  
 sigh  
 Relieved her thoughts; dull silence and  
 quick chat  
 Were tried in vain by those who served; she  
 gave 415  
 No sign, save breath, of having left the grave.

64

Her handmaids tended, but she heeded not;  
 Her father watched, she turned her eyes  
 away;  
 She recognized no being, and no spot,  
 However dear or cherished in their day; 420  
 They changed from room to room, but all for-  
 got,  
 Gentle, but without memory she lay;

At length those eyes, which they would fain be  
weaning  
Back to old thoughts, waxed full of fearful  
meaning.

65

And then a slave bethought her of a harp; 425  
The harper came, and tuned his instrument;  
At the first notes, irregular and sharp,  
On him her flashing eyes a moment bent,  
Then to the wall she turned as if to warp  
Her thoughts from sorrow through her  
heart re-sent; 430  
And he began a long low island-song  
Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong.

66

Anon her thin wan fingers beat the wall  
In time to his old tune; he changed the  
theme,  
And sung of love; the fierce name struck  
through all 435  
Her recollection; on her flashed the dream  
Of what she was, and is, if ye could call  
To be so being; in a gushing stream  
The tears rushed forth from her o'erclouded  
brain,  
Like mountain mists at length dissolved in  
rain. 440

67

Short solace, vain relief!—thought came too  
quick,  
And whirled her brain to madness; she  
arose  
As one who ne'er had dwelt among the sick,  
And flew at all she met, as on her foes;  
But no one ever heard her speak or shriek, 445  
Although her paroxysm drew towards its  
close;—  
Hers was a frenzy which disdained to rave,  
Even when they smote her, in the hope to  
save.

68

Yet she betrayed at times a gleam of sense;  
Nothing could make her meet her father's  
face, 450  
Though on all other things with looks intense  
She gazed, but none she ever could retrace;  
Food she refused, and raiment; no pretense  
· Avail'd for either; neither change of place,  
Nor time, nor skill, nor remedy, could give  
her 455  
Senses to sleep—the power seemed gone for  
ever.

69

Twelve days and nights she withered thus; at  
last,  
Without a groan, or sigh, or glance, to show  
A parting pang, the spirit from her passed:  
And they who watched her nearest could  
not know 460  
The very instant, till the change that cast  
Her sweet face into shadow, dull and slow,  
Glazed o'er her eyes—the beautiful, the  
black—  
Oh! to possess such luster—and then lack!

70

She died, but not alone; she held, within, 465  
A second principle of life, which might  
Have dawned a fair and sinless child of sin;  
But closed its little being without light,  
And went down to the grave unborn, wherein  
Blossom and bough lie withered with one  
blight; 470  
In vain the dews of Heaven descend above  
The bleeding flower and blasted fruit of love.

71

Thus lived—thus died she; never more on her  
Shall sorrow light, or shame. She was not  
made  
Through years or moons the inner weight to  
bear, 475  
Which colder hearts endure till they are laid  
By age in earth: her days and pleasures were  
Brief, but delightful—such as had not stayed  
Long with her destiny; but she sleeps well  
By the sea-shore, whereon she loved to dwell.

72

That isle is now all desolate and bare, 481  
Its dwellings down, its tenants passed away;  
None but her own and father's grave is there,  
And nothing outward tells of human clay;  
Ye could not know where lies a thing so fair,  
No stone is there to show, no tongue to say,  
What was; no dirge, except the hollow sea's,  
Mourns o'er the beauty of the Cyclades. 488

73

But many a Greek maid in a loving song  
Sighs o'er her name; and many an islander  
With her sire's story makes the night less long;  
Valor was his, and beauty dwelt with her;  
If she loved rashly, her life paid for wrong—  
A heavy price must all pay who thus err,  
In some shape; let none think to fly the  
danger, 495  
For soon or late Love is his own avenger.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR<sup>1</sup>

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,  
 Since others it hath ceased to move:  
 Yet, though I cannot be beloved,  
 Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;  
 The flowers and fruits of love are gone;  
 The worm, the canker, and the grief  
 Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys  
 Is lone as some volcanic isle;  
 No torch is kindled at its blaze—  
 A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,  
 The exalted portion of the pain  
 And power of love, I cannot share,  
 But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—  
 Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor  
*now*,

<sup>1</sup>Written at Missolonghi on 22 January, 1824; published in the same year.

Where glory decks the hero's bier,  
 Or binds his brow.

20

The sword, the banner, and the field,  
 Glory and Greece, around me see!  
 The Spartan, borne upon his shield,<sup>2</sup>  
 Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)  
 Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*  
 Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,  
 And then strike home!

25

Tread those reviving passions down,  
 Unworthy manhood!—unto thee  
 Indifferent should the smile or frown  
 Of beauty be.

30

¶If thou regrett'st thy youth, *why live?*  
 The land of honorable death  
 Is here:—up to the field, and give  
 Away thy breath!

35

Seek out—less often sought than found—  
 A soldier's grave, for thee the best;  
 Then look around, and choose thy ground,  
 And take thy rest.

40

<sup>2</sup>Wounded or slain Spartans were borne from the field upon their shields.



## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)

Shelley was born at Field Place, near Horsham, in Sussex, on 4 August, 1792, the eldest of six children born to Sir Timothy and Elizabeth Shelley. His childhood was sheltered and happy until, at the age of ten, he was placed in a school at Brentford, where his remarkable beauty and appearance of gentleness tempted his school-fellows to bully and torment him. There is reason for believing that his days here and later at Eton, where he was in residence from 1804 until 1810, were by no means wholly unhappy, and he made some friends at Eton. Nevertheless he neither understood nor was understood by his school-fellows, and the strangeness of his temperament was more in evidence than his talents, with the result that he suffered much. A school-contemporary wrote, "I have seen him surrounded, hooted, baited like a maddened bull, and at this distance of time I seem to hear ringing in my ears the cry which Shelley was wont to utter in his paroxysm of revengeful anger." Imaginative, sensitive, overwrought, largely unguided, Shelley in effect retired as much as possible from the external world to a world of his own. There he dreamed his own dreams, pursued studies not admitted to the curriculum, and read strange books—among them William Godwin's *Political Justice*. In the spring of 1810 Shelley entered University College, Oxford. Here, of course, he had greater freedom than at Eton, and no wise guidance to direct his thoughts and activities, no combatants even to stiffen with substance his eager scientific and philosophical inquiries. The result was that Shelley, already converted to Godwin's gospel of reason, after some study of Locke and Hume wrote a pamphlet on *The Necessity of Atheism*, grounding his conclusion on the contention that all knowledge must come through the senses. This pamphlet he proceeded to circulate among bishops, heads of colleges, and others, with the consequence that, about eleven months after his coming to Oxford, he was expelled. The event not unnaturally caused difficulties with his father, who was a kindly, well-intentioned country gentleman, not without his perceptions—as is shown by a sentence from a letter to his solicitor, "This misguided young man courts persecution, and which to him would be a favor"—but totally unfitted to deal amicably with his terrible son. It was impossible that either should understand the other, and from this time Shelley's personal relations with his father practically ceased, though after

a short interval Sir Timothy agreed to give his son a small allowance. In August, 1811, Shelley eloped with Harriet Westbrook, the daughter of a well-to-do coffee-house keeper—an event which completed Shelley's estrangement from his father. He was nineteen at the time, and the girl sixteen. He had made her a convert to his political and philosophical radicalism and he felt for her a master's enthusiasm for a willing disciple, and perhaps something more, but he was not genuinely in love with her. She, on the other hand, was in love with him, and made him believe that by marrying her he could rescue her from tyranny exercised by her father.

A part of Shelley's strangeness was his habit of acting fully and immediately upon his convictions, whatever they were, and, in spite of experience, he believed that other people needed only to be told the saving truth in order to act on it. After his marriage he spent several years in wandering about, going to Ireland and to various places in England, attempting to advance the cause of freedom and of emancipation from outworn institutions by scattering incendiary literature among the people he met. During this period he learned that William Godwin was still alive and immediately got into communication with him, flattering Godwin by telling him that he was the author, as indeed he practically was, of all his beliefs. In the spring of 1814 Shelley became definitely estranged from his wife, and the two finally separated in May. She had borne him one child and was about to bear him another. He, however, had fallen violently in love with Godwin's daughter Mary, and it was in accordance with the principles of all three that the existence of his wife should be no bar to his union with Mary. Godwin, Shelley, and Mary believed that marriage was an iniquitous institution, since love as well as everything else should be completely free. Accordingly in July, 1814, Shelley and Mary began living together. Two years later Harriet Shelley drowned herself in the Serpentine, and Shelley then married Mary Godwin. It is not clear how far Shelley is to be blamed for his wife's suicide, but it is clear enough that Shelley's habit of acting instantly on his convictions was a force which no ordinary considerations of humanity towards others could have stopped. In 1814 he had gone to France with Mary Godwin; in 1816 he was in Switzerland, and during that summer spent much time with Byron there; in

1818 he again left England, this time not to return. The remaining years of his life were spent in Italy. He was at Naples and Venice in 1818 and 1819, at Rome in the latter year and in 1820, and at Pisa from 1820 until 1822. He was drowned while sailing in the Bay of Lerici on 8 July, 1822. When his body was found later, washed up on the shore, he had a volume of Sophocles in one pocket and a volume of Keats in another—the latter open with its covers turned back, as if he had suddenly thrust it there when the waters threatened to engulf him. He was buried at Rome.

When Shelley went to Italy he had already written much prose and poetry, but nearly all his greatest work was done during the last four years of his life. Then the fire of conviction which had intensely burned in him since boyhood broke forth into poetry which, for its union of metrical skill, ethereal imagination, and passionate ardor, has no equal in English literature. His ardor was

for a better world, but a world to be made better, on Godwinian lines, by the repudiation of practically all the institutions which give form to society. He himself was, as Mr. George Gordon has said, "an unfilial son, a professed atheist, unhonored by his school, rejected by his university, an adulterer, and the deserter, if not the murderer of his wife,—the avowed enemy of all constituted power, in state, church, and family,—advocate, it was reported, of a polygamous and godless Arcadia" (Warton Lect. XIV, Brit. Acad.)—and all this for the sake of a better world. It is no wonder that he should be at once worshiped and abhorred, at once "upheld as a demigod, and abjured as a sweet-voiced demon" (W. Sharp, *Shelley*). He was, in fact, something of both, for, however wrong-headed he was, he was something more than human in his sincerity, his unworldliness, and his gift of enraptured song. "Poetry turns all things to loveliness," he wrote—and proved this to be a perilous truth.

## HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY<sup>1</sup>

### I

THE awful shadow of some unseen Power  
Floats though unseen among us,—visiting  
This various world with as inconstant wing  
As summer winds that creep from flower to  
flower,—  
Like moonbeams that behind some piny  
mountain shower, 5  
It visits with inconstant glance  
Each human heart and countenance;  
Like hues and harmonies of evening,—  
Like clouds in starlight widely  
spread,—  
Like memory of music fled,— 10  
Like aught that for its grace may be  
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

<sup>1</sup>Written probably in Switzerland in the summer of 1816; published in the *Examiner* (edited by Leigh Hunt), January, 1817. By intellectual beauty Shelley means an immaterial form or archetype which is beauty itself. When we contemplate beautiful objects we get some notion, but only a partial, incomplete notion, of what beauty itself must be; for material objects, no matter how beautiful, always contain some flaws and are subject to change and decay. It is only when we are carried beyond the incomplete beauty of material objects that we are able to contemplate the idea of beauty itself. The conception is Platonic and the best commentary on this and other poems by Shelley is the speech of Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*. Shelley's Platonism, however, is frequently, if not always, combined with essentially modern ideas which are its negative. This is illustrated in the present poem by Shelley's hope that the spirit of beauty, could it be more securely possessed by men, would throw them back on themselves in a sudden access of universal brotherly love.

### II

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate  
With thine own hues all thou dost shine  
upon  
Of human thought or form,—where art  
thou gone? 15  
Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,  
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?  
Ask why the sunlight not for ever  
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain-  
river,  
Why aught should fail and fade that ~~once~~ is  
shown, 20  
Why fear and dream and death and  
birth  
Cast on the daylight of this earth  
Such gloom,—why man has such a  
scope  
For love and hate, despondency and hope?

### III

No voice from some sublimer world hath  
ever 25  
To sage or poet these responses given—  
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost,  
and Heaven,  
Remain the records of their vain endeavor,  
Frail spells—whose uttered charm might not  
avail to sever,  
From all we hear and all we see, 30  
Doubt, chance, and mutability.  
Thy light alone—like mist o'er mountains  
driven,

Or music by the night-wind sent  
Through strings of some still instrument,  
Or moonlight on a midnight stream, 35  
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

## IV

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds depart  
And come, for some uncertain moments lent.

Man were immortal, and omnipotent,  
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art, 40  
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.

Thou messenger of sympathies,  
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes—  
Thou—that to human thought art nourishment,

Like darkness to a dying flame! 45  
Depart not as thy shadow came,  
Depart not—lest the grave should be,  
Like life and fear, a dark reality.

## V

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped  
Through many a listening chamber, cave  
and ruin, 50

And starlight wood, with fearful steps  
pursuing

Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.  
I called on poisonous names with which our  
youth is fed;

I was not heard—I saw them not—  
When musing deeply on the lot 55  
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are  
woeing

All vital things that wake to bring  
News of birds and blossoming,—  
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me; 59

I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

## VI

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers  
To thee and thine—have I not kept the  
vow?

With beating heart and streaming eyes,  
even now

I call the phantoms of a thousand hours  
Each from his voiceless grave: they have in  
visioned bowers 65

Of studious zeal or love's delight  
Outwatched with me the envious  
night—

They know that never joy illumed my brow  
Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst  
free

This world from its dark slavery, 70

That thou—O awful LOVELINESS,  
Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot  
express.

## VII

The day becomes more solemn and serene  
When noon is past—there is a harmony  
In autumn, and a luster in its sky, 75

Which through the summer is not heard or  
seen,

As if it could not be, as if it had not been!  
Thus let thy power, which like the  
truth

Of nature on my passive youth  
Descended, to my onward life supply 80

Its calm—to one who worships thee,  
And every form containing thee,  
Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind  
To fear himself, and love all human kind.

OZYMANDIAS<sup>1</sup>

I MET a traveler from an antique land  
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose  
frown, 4

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless  
things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart  
that fed;<sup>2</sup>

And on the pedestal these words appear:  
"My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings: 10  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

## ✓ STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES<sup>3</sup>

## I

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
The waves are dancing fast and bright,  
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear  
The purple noon's transparent might,  
The breath of the moist earth is light, 5  
Around its unexpanded buds;

Like many a voice of one delight,  
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
The City's voice itself, is soft like Solitude's.

<sup>1</sup>Published in the *Examiner*, January, 1818.

<sup>2</sup>The hand, *i. e.*, of the sculptor, and the heart of Ozymandias.

<sup>3</sup>Said by Mrs. Shelley to have been written in December, 1818; published in 1824.



## II

I see the Deep's untrampled floor 10  
 With green and purple seaweeds strown;  
 I see the waves upon the shore,  
 Like light dissolved in star-showers,  
 thrown:  
 I sit upon the sands alone,—  
 The lightning of the noontide ocean 15  
 Is flashing round me, and a tone  
 Arises from its measured motion,  
 How sweet! did any heart now share in my  
 emotion.

## III

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,  
 Nor peace within nor calm around, 20  
 Nor that content surpassing wealth  
 The sage in meditation found,  
 And walked with inward glory  
 crowned—  
 Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.  
 Others I see whom these surround—25  
 Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;—  
 To me that cup has been dealt in another  
 measure.

## IV

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
 Even as the winds and waters are;  
 I could lie down like a tired child, 30  
 And weep away the life of care  
 Which I have borne and yet must bear,  
 Till death like sleep might steal on me,  
 And I might feel in the warm air  
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea 35  
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last mo-  
 notony.

## V

Some might lament that I were cold,  
 As I, when this sweet day is gone,  
 Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,  
 Insults with this untimely moan; 40  
 They might lament—for I am one  
 Whom men love not,—and yet regret,  
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun  
 Shall on its stainless glory set,  
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in  
 memory yet.<sup>1</sup>

ENGLAND IN 1819<sup>2</sup>

AN OLD, mad, blind, despised, and dying  
 king,<sup>3</sup>—  
 Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow

<sup>1</sup>This stanza may be paraphrased: Some might lament my death, as I shall lament the passing of this sweet day;—they might lament, but not with joy, such as will surround the memory of this day.

<sup>2</sup>First published in 1839, presumably written in 1819.

<sup>3</sup>George III.

Through public scorn,—mud from a muddy  
 spring,—  
 Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,  
 But leech-like to their fainting country cling, 5  
 Till they drop, blind in blood, without a  
 blow,—  
 A people starved and stabbed in the untilled  
 field,—  
 An army, which liberticide and prey  
 Makes as a two-edged sword to all who  
 wield,—  
 Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and  
 slay; 10  
 Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;  
 A Senate,—Time's worst statute unre-  
 pealed,<sup>4</sup>—  
 Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom<sup>5</sup>  
 may  
 Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND<sup>6</sup>

I - *Leaves*

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's  
 being,  
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves  
 dead  
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter  
 fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou, 5  
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill 10  
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
 With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;  
 Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

<sup>4</sup>The law imposing civil disabilities on Roman Catholics.

<sup>5</sup>Liberty.

<sup>6</sup>Written in 1819, published in 1820. "This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions. The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it" (Shelley's note).

## II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's  
commotion,<sup>5</sup>  
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are  
shed,  
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven  
and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread  
On the blue surface of thine æry surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head<sup>20</sup>

Of some fierce Mænad,<sup>1</sup> even from the dim  
verge  
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,  
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou  
dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night  
Will be the dome of a vast sepulcher,<sup>25</sup>  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: oh,  
hear!

## III

Thou who didst waken from his summer  
dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,<sup>30</sup>  
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baïæ's bay,<sup>2</sup>  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers<sup>35</sup>  
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them!  
Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far be-  
low

The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which  
wear

The sapless foliage of the ocean, know<sup>40</sup>

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,  
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, hear!

## IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;<sup>44</sup>  
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free  
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even  
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,  
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed<sup>50</sup>  
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have  
striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.  
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!  
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and  
bowed<sup>55</sup>  
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and  
proud.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:  
What if my leaves are falling like its own!  
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,  
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit  
fierce,<sup>61</sup>  
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe  
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!  
And, by the incantation of this verse,<sup>65</sup>

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth  
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!  
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, Wind,<sup>69</sup>  
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

THE INDIAN SERENADE<sup>3</sup>

## I

I ARISE from dreams of thee  
In the first sweet sleep of night,  
When the winds are breathing low,  
And the stars are shining bright:  
I arise from dreams of thee,<sup>5</sup>  
And a spirit in my feet  
Hath led me—who knows how?  
To thy chamber window, Sweet!

## II

The wandering airs they faint  
On the dark, the silent stream—<sup>10</sup>  
The Champak<sup>4</sup> odors fail  
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;  
The nightingale's complaint,  
It dies upon her heart;—  
As I must on thine,<sup>15</sup>  
Oh, belovéd as thou art!

<sup>1</sup>Attendant upon Bacchus.

<sup>2</sup>In Campania, Italy.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1819, published in *The Liberal*, 1822.

<sup>4</sup>An East Indian tree related to the magnolia.

## III

O lift me from the grass!  
 I die! I faint! I fail!  
 Let thy love in kisses rain  
 On my lips and eyelids pale.  
 My cheek is cold and white, alas!  
 My heart beats loud and fast;—  
 Oh! press it to thine own again,  
 Where it will break at last.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

## I

THE fountains mingle with the river  
 And the rivers with the Ocean,  
 The winds of Heaven mix for ever  
 With a sweet emotion;  
 Nothing in the world is single;  
 All things by a law divine  
 In one spirit meet and mingle.  
 Why not I with thine?—

## II

See the mountains kiss high Heaven  
 And the waves clasp one another;  
 No sister-flower would be forgiven  
 If it disdained its brother;  
 And the sunlight clasps the earth  
 And the moonbeams kiss the sea:  
 What is all this sweet work worth  
 If thou kiss not me?

✓ THE CLOUD<sup>2</sup>

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting  
 flowers,  
 From the seas and the streams;  
 I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
 In their noonday dreams.  
 From my wings are shaken the dews that  
 waken  
 The sweet buds every one,  
 When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
 As she dances about the sun.  
 I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
 And whiten the green plains under,  
 And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
 And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
 And their great pines groan aghast;  
 And all the night 'tis my pillow white,  
 While I sleep in the arms of the blast.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1819 and published by Hunt in *The Indicator* in the same year.

<sup>2</sup>Written and published in 1820.

Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,  
 Lightning my pilot sits;  
 In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
 It struggles and howls at fits;  
 Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,  
 This pilot is guiding me,  
 Lured by the love of the genii that move  
 In the depths of the purple sea;  
 Over the rills, and the crag, and the hills,  
 Over the lakes and the plains,  
 Wherever he dream, under mountain or  
 stream,  
 The Spirit he loves remains;  
 And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue  
 smile,  
 Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,  
 And his burning plumes outspread,  
 Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
 When the morning star shines dead;  
 As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
 Which an earthquake rocks and swings,  
 An eagle alit one moment may sit  
 In the light of its golden wings.  
 And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea  
 beneath,  
 Its ardors of rest and of love,  
 And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
 From the depth of Heaven above,  
 With wings folded I rest, on mine æry nest,  
 As still as a brooding dove.

That orbéd maiden with white fire laden,  
 Whom mortals call the Moon,  
 Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,  
 By the midnight breezes strewn;  
 And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,  
 Which only the angels hear,  
 May have broken the woof of my tent's thin  
 roof,  
 The stars peep behind her and peer;  
 And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
 Like a swarm of golden bees,  
 When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,  
 Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,  
 Like strips of the sky fallen through me on  
 high,  
 Are each paved with the moon and these.<sup>3</sup>

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,  
 And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;  
 The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and  
 swim,  
 When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.  
 From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,  
 Over a torrent sea,  
 Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—  
 The mountains its columns be.

<sup>3</sup>*I. e.*, with the moon and the stars.



The triumphal arch through which I march  
 With hurricane, fire, and snow,  
 When the Powers of the air are chained to my  
 chair,  
 Is the million-colored bow; 70  
 The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,  
 While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,  
 And the nursling of the Sky;  
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and  
 shores; 75  
 I change, but I cannot die.  
 For after the rain when with never a stain  
 The pavilion of Heaven is bare,  
 And the winds and sunbeams with their con-  
 vex gleams  
 Build up the blue dome of air, 80  
 I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,<sup>1</sup>  
 And out of the caverns of rain,  
 Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from  
 the tomb,  
 I arise and unbuild it again.

### ✓ TO A SKYLARK<sup>2</sup>

*grail* HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit! *Spain*  
 Bird thou never wert,  
 That from Heaven, or near it,  
 Pourest thy full heart  
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art. 5

Higher still and higher  
 From the earth thou springest  
 Like a cloud of fire;  
 The blue deep thou wingest,  
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever  
 singest. 10

In the golden lightning  
 Of the sunken sun,  
 O'er which clouds are bright'ning,  
 Thou dost float and run; 14  
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even  
 Melts around thy flight;  
 Like a star of Heaven,  
 In the broad daylight  
 Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill  
 delight, 20

<sup>1</sup>U. e., the blue dome of air. A cenotaph is an empty tomb, or a monument erected in honor of one buried elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup>Written at Leghorn in 1820 and published in the same year.

Keen as are the arrows  
 Of that silver sphere,  
 Whose intense lamp narrows  
 In the white dawn clear 24  
 Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air  
 With thy voice is loud,  
 As, when night is bare,  
 From one lonely cloud  
 The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven  
 is overflowed. 30

What thou art we know not;  
 What is most like thee?  
 From rainbow clouds there flow not  
 Drops so bright to see  
 As from thy presence showers a rain of  
 melody. 35

Like a Poet hidden  
 In the light of thought,  
 Singing hymns unbidden,  
 Till the world is wrought  
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded  
 not: 40

*8 1/2 12 - description of Bird*  
 Like a high-born maiden  
 In a palace-tower,  
 Soothing her love-laden  
 Soul in secret hour  
 With music sweet as love, which overflows  
 her bower: 45

*garden*  
 Like a glow-worm golden  
 In a dell of dew,  
 Scattering unbeholden  
 Its aërial hue  
 Among the flowers and grass, which screen it  
 from the view! 50

Like a rose embowered  
 In its own green leaves,  
 By warm winds deflowered,  
 Till the scent it gives  
 Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-  
 winged thieves: 55

Sound of vernal showers  
 On the twinkling grass,  
 Rain-awakened flowers,  
 All that ever was  
 Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth  
 surpass: 60

1 2 Teach us, Sprite or Bird,  
 What sweet thoughts are thine:  
 I have never heard  
 Praise of love or wine 64  
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
 Or triumphal chant,  
 Matched with thine would be all  
 But an empty vaunt,  
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden  
 want. 70

What objects are the fountains  
 Of thy happy strain?  
 What fields, or waves, or mountains?  
 What shapes of sky or plain?  
 What love of thine own kind? what ignorance  
 of pain? 75

With thy clear keen joyance  
 Languor cannot be:  
 Shadow of annoyance  
 Never came near thee:  
 Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad  
 satiety. 80

Waking or asleep,  
 Thou of death must deem  
 Things more true and deep  
 Than we mortals dream,  
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal  
 stream? 85

We look before and after,  
 And pine for what is not:  
 Our sincerest laughter  
 With some pain is fraught;  
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of  
 saddest thought. 90

Yet if we could scorn  
 Hate, and pride, and fear;  
 If we were things born  
 Not to shed a tear,  
 I know not how thy joy we ever should come  
 near. 95

Better than all measures  
 Of delightful sound,  
 Better than all treasures  
 That in books are found,  
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the  
 ground! 100

4 Teach me half the gladness  
 That thy brain must know,  
 Such harmonious madness  
 From my lips would flow  
 The world should listen then—as I am listen-  
 ing now. 105

ODE TO LIBERTY<sup>1</sup>

Yet, Freedom, yet, thy banner, torn but flying,  
 Streams like a thunder-storm against the wind.  
 —BYRON.

## I

A GLORIOUS people vibrated again  
 The lightning of the nations: Liberty  
 From heart to heart, from tower to tower,  
 o'er Spain,  
 Scattering contagious fire into the sky,  
 Gleamed. My soul spurned the chains of its  
 dismay, 5  
 And in the rapid plumes of song  
 Clothed itself, sublime and strong  
 (As a young eagle soars the morning clouds  
 among),  
 Hovering in verse o'er its accustomed  
 prey;  
 Till from its station in the Heaven of  
 fame 10  
 The Spirit's whirlwind rapped it, and the  
 ray  
 Of the remotest sphere of living flame  
 Which paves the void was from behind it  
 flung,  
 As foam from a ship's swiftness, when there  
 came  
 A voice out of the deep: I will record the  
 same. 15

## II

“The Sun and the serenest Moon sprang  
 forth:  
 The burning stars of the abyss were hurled  
 Into the depths of Heaven. The dædal<sup>2</sup> earth,  
 That island in the ocean of the world,  
 Hung in its cloud of all-sustaining air: 20  
 But this divinest universe  
 Was yet a chaos and a curse,  
 For thou<sup>3</sup> wert not: but, power from worst  
 producing worse,  
 The spirit of the beasts was kindled there,  
 And of the birds, and of the watery  
 forms, 25  
 And there was war among them, and despair  
 Within them, raging without truce or  
 terms:  
 The bosom of their violated nurse  
 Groaned, for beasts warred on beasts, and  
 worms on worms,  
 And men on men; each heart was as a hell of  
 storms. 30

<sup>1</sup>Written early in 1820 and published in the same year. The motto is from *Childe Harold*, IV, Stanza 98. The occasion of the poem was an uprising against absolutist government in Spain, which occurred early in 1820 and at the time appeared to be triumphing in Madrid.

<sup>2</sup>Curiously contrived.

<sup>3</sup>Liberty.

## III

"Man, the imperial shape, then multiplied  
 His generations under the pavilion  
 Of the Sun's throne: palace and pyramid,  
 Temple and prison, to many a swarming  
 million  
 Were, as to mountain-wolves their ragged  
 caves. 35  
 This human living multitude  
 Was savage, cunning, blind, and rude,  
 For thou wert not; but o'er the populous  
 solitude,  
 Like one fierce cloud over a waste of waves,  
 Hung Tyranny; beneath, sat deified 40  
 The sister-pest,<sup>1</sup> congregator of slaves;  
 Into the shadow of her pinions wide  
 Anarchs and priests, who feed on gold and  
 blood  
 Till with the stain their inmost souls are  
 dyed,  
 Drove the astonished herds of men from  
 every side. 45

## IV

"The nodding promontories, and blue isles,  
 And cloud-like mountains, and dividuous<sup>2</sup>  
 waves  
 Of Greece, basked glorious in the open smiles  
 Of favoring Heaven: from their enchanted  
 caves  
 Prophetic echoes flung dim melody. 50  
 On the unapprehensive wild,  
 The vine, the corn, the olive mild,  
 Grew savage yet, to human use unreconciled;  
 And, like unfolded flowers beneath the sea,  
 Like the man's thought dark in the  
 infant's brain, 55  
 Like aught that is which wraps what is to  
 be,  
 Art's deathless dreams lay veiled by  
 many a vein  
 Of Parian stone; and, yet a speechless child,  
 Verse murmured, and Philosophy did strain  
 Her lidless eyes for thee; when o'er the  
 Ægean main 60

## V

"Athens arose: a city such as vision  
 Builds from the purple crags and silver  
 towers  
 Of battlemented cloud, as in derision  
 Of kinliest masonry: the ocean-floors  
 Pave it; the evening sky pavilions it; 65  
 Its portals are inhabited  
 By thunder-zonéd winds, each head  
 Within its cloudy wings with sun-fire gar-  
 landed,—

<sup>1</sup>I. e., religion.<sup>2</sup>Dividing.

A divine work! Athens, diviner yet,  
 Gleamed with its crest of columns, on the  
 will 70  
 Of man, as on a mount of diamond, set;<sup>3</sup>  
 For thou wert, and thine all-creative skill  
 Peopled, with forms that mock the eternal  
 dead  
 In marble immortality, that hill<sup>4</sup>  
 Which was thine earliest throne and latest  
 oracle. 75

## VI

"Within the surface of Time's fleeting river  
 Its wrinkled image lies, as then it lay  
 Immovably unquiet, and for ever  
 It trembles, but it cannot pass away!  
 The voices of thy bards and sages thunder 80  
 With an earth-awakening blast  
 Through the caverns of the past  
 (Religion veils her eyes; Oppression shrinks  
 aghast):  
 A wingéd sound of joy, and love, and won-  
 der,  
 Which soars where Expectation never  
 flew, 85  
 Rending the veil of space and time asunder!  
 One ocean feeds the clouds, and streams,  
 and dew;  
 One Sun illumines Heaven; one Spirit vast  
 With life and love makes chaos ever new,  
 As Athens doth the world with thy delight  
 renew. 90

## VII

"Then Rome was, and from thy deep bosom  
 fairest,  
 Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmæan Mænad,<sup>5</sup>  
 She drew the milk of greatness, though thy  
 dearest<sup>6</sup>  
 From that Elysian food was yet unweaned;  
 And many a deed of terrible uprightness 95  
 By thy sweet love was sanctified;  
 And in thy smile, and by thy side,  
 Sainly Camillus<sup>7</sup> lived, and firm Atilius<sup>8</sup> died.  
 But when tears stained thy robe of vestal  
 whiteness, 99  
 And gold profaned thy Capitolian throne,  
 Thou didst desert, with spirit-wingéd light-  
 ness,

<sup>3</sup>I. e., Athens was a state based on the will of its citizens.<sup>4</sup>The Acropolis.<sup>5</sup>See Euripides, *Bacchæ*, ll. 699-700. The Cadmæan Mænads are Theban followers of Bacchus, and are described by Euripides as nursing young wolves.<sup>6</sup>Athens.<sup>7</sup>A hero of republican Rome who defeated the Gauls under Brennus in 390 B. C.<sup>8</sup>Generally called Regulus. He was captured by the Carthaginians but dissuaded the Senate from concluding a peace that would have saved his life (250 B. C.).



The senate of the tyrants: they sunk  
prone

Slaves of one tyrant: Palatinus<sup>1</sup> sighed  
Faint echoes of Ionian song; that tone  
Thou didst delay to hear, lamenting to dis-  
own. 105

## VIII

"From what Hyrcanian<sup>2</sup> glen or frozen hill,  
Or piny promontory of the Arctic main,  
Or utmost islet inaccessible,  
Didst thou lament the ruin of thy reign,  
Teaching the woods and waves, and desert  
rocks, 110

And every Naiad's ice-cold urn,  
To talk in echoes sad and stern  
Of that sublimest lore which man had dared  
unlearn?

For neither didst thou watch the wizard  
flocks

Of the Scald's dreams, nor haunt the  
Druid's sleep. 115

What if the tears rained through thy shat-  
tered locks

Were quickly dried? for thou didst groan,  
not weep,

When from its sea of death, to kill and burn,  
The Galilean serpent<sup>3</sup> forth did creep,  
And made thy world an undistinguishable  
heap. 120

## IX

"A thousand years the Earth cried, 'Where art  
thou?'

And then the shadow of thy coming fell  
On Saxon Alfred's<sup>4</sup> olive-cinctured brow:  
And many a warrior-peopled citadel,  
Like rocks which fire lifts out of the flat deep,  
Arose in sacred Italy, 126

Frowning o'er the tempestuous sea  
Of kings, and priests, and slaves, in tower-  
crowned majesty;

That multitudinous anarchy did sweep  
And burst around their walls, like idle  
foam, 130

Whilst from the human spirit's deepest deep  
Strange melody with love and awe struck  
dumb

Dissonant arms; and Art, which cannot die,  
With divine wand traced on our earthly  
home

Fit imagery to pave Heaven's everlasting  
dome. 135

<sup>1</sup>One of the seven hills of Rome, on which was the residence  
of Augustus and later emperors.

<sup>2</sup>Persian province on the shore of the Caspian.

<sup>3</sup>Christianity. <sup>4</sup>Alfred the Great.

## X

"Thou huntress swifter than the Moon! thou  
terror

Of the world's wolves! thou bearer of the  
quiver,

Whose sunlike shafts pierce tempest-wingéd  
Error,

As light may pierce the clouds when they  
dissever

In the calm regions of the orient day! 140

Luther caught thy wakening glance;

Like lightning, from his leaden lance

Reflected, it dissolved the visions of the trance

In which, as in a tomb, the nations lay;

And England's prophets hailed thee as  
their queen, 145

In songs whose music cannot pass away,

Though it must flow for ever: not unseen

\*Before the spirit-sighted countenance

Of Milton didst thou pass, from the sad  
scene

Beyond whose night he saw, with a dejected  
mien. 150

## XI

"The eager hours and reluctant years  
As on a dawn-illuminated mountain stood,

Trampling to silence their loud hopes and  
fears,

Darkening each other with their multitude,  
And cried aloud, 'Liberty!' Indignation 155

Answered Pity from her cave;

Death grew pale within the grave,

And Desolation howled to the destroyer, Save!

When like Heaven's Sun girt by the exhalation 159

Of its own glorious light, thou didst arise,

Chasing thy foes from nation unto nation

Like shadows: as if day had cloven the  
skies

At dreaming midnight o'er the western wave,

Men started, staggering with a glad sur-  
prise,

Under the lightnings of thine unfamiliar  
eyes. 165

## XII

"Thou Heaven of earth! what spells could  
pall thee then

In ominous eclipse? a thousand years

Bred from the slime of deep Oppression's den,

Dyed all thy liquid light with blood and  
tears,

Till thy sweet stars could weep the stain  
away; 170

How like Bacchanals of blood

Round France, the ghastly vintage, stood  
Destruction's sceptered slaves, and Folly's  
mitered brood!

When one,<sup>1</sup> like them, but mightier far than they,  
 The Anarch of thine own bewildered powers,  
 Rose: armies mingled in obscure array,  
 Like clouds with clouds, darkening the sacred bowers  
 Of serene Heaven. He, by the past pursued,  
 Rests with those dead, but unforgotten hours,  
 Whose ghosts scare victor kings in their ancestral towers. 180

## XIII

"England yet sleeps: was she not called of old?  
 Spain calls her now, as with its thrilling thunder  
 Vesuvius wakens Ætna, and the cold  
 Snow-crag by its reply are cloven in sunder:  
 O'er the lit waves every Æolian isle<sup>2</sup>  
 From Pithecusa to Pelorus  
 Howls, and leaps, and glares in chorus:  
 They cry, 'Be dim; ye lamps of Heaven suspended o'er us!'  
 Her<sup>3</sup> chains are threads of gold, she need but smile  
 And they dissolve; but Spain's were links of steel,  
 Till bit to dust by virtue's keenest file.  
 Twins of a single destiny! appeal  
 To the eternal years enthroned before us  
 In the dim West; impress us from a seal,  
 All ye have thought and done! Time cannot dare conceal. 195

## XIV

"Tomb of Arminius<sup>4</sup> render up thy dead  
 Till, like a standard from a watch-tower's staff,  
 His soul may stream over the tyrant's head;  
 Thy victory shall be his epitaph,  
 Wild Bacchanal of truth's mysterious wine,  
 King-deluded Germany,  
 His dead spirit lives in thee. 201  
 Why do we fear or hope? thou art already free!  
 And thou, lost Paradise of this divine  
 And glorious world! thou flowery wilderness!  
 Thou island of eternity! thou shrine  
 Where Desolation, clothed with loveliness,  
 Worships the thing; thou wert! O Italy,

<sup>1</sup>Napoleon.<sup>2</sup>A group of islands north-east of Sicily. Pithecusa is an island outside the Bay of Naples, and Pelorus is a promontory north-east of Sicily.<sup>3</sup>England's.<sup>4</sup>He preserved the freedom of Germany in A.D. 9 by preventing the advance of the Romans beyond the Rhine.

Gather thy blood into thy heart; repress  
 The beasts who make their dens thy sacred palaces. 210

## XV

"Oh, that the free would stamp the impious name  
 Of KING into the dust! or write it there,  
 So that this blot upon the page of fame  
 Were as a serpent's path, which the light air  
 Erases, and the flat sands close behind! 215  
 Ye the oracle have heard:  
 Lift the victory-flashing sword,  
 And cut the snaky knots of this foul gordian<sup>5</sup> word,  
 Which, weak itself as stubble, yet can bind  
 Into a mass, irrefragably firm,  
 The axes and the rods which awe mankind;  
 The sound has poison in it, 'tis the sperm  
 Of what makes life foul, cankerous, and abhorred;  
 Disdain not thou, at thine appointed term,  
 To set thine armed heel on this reluctant worm. 225

## XVI

"Oh, that the wise from their bright minds  
 would kindle  
 Such lamps within the dome of this dim world,  
 That the pale name of PRIEST might shrink  
 and dwindle 228  
 Into the hell from which it first was hurled,  
 A scoff of impious pride from fiends impure;  
 Till human thoughts might kneel alone,  
 Each before the judgment-throne  
 Of its own aweless soul, or of the Power unknown!  
 Oh, that the words which make the thoughts  
 obscure  
 From which they spring, as clouds of glimmering dew 235  
 From a white lake blot Heaven's blue portraiture,  
 Were stripped of their thin masks and various hue  
 And frowns and smiles and splendors not their own,  
 Till in the nakedness of false and true  
 They stand before their Lord, each to receive its due! 240

## XVII

"He who taught man to vanquish whatsoever  
 Can be between the cradle and the grave  
 Crowned him the King of Life. Oh, vain endeavor!  
 If on his own high will, a willing slave,

<sup>5</sup>Intricate.

He has enthroned the oppression and the  
oppressor. 245

What if earth can clothe and feed  
Amplest millions at their need,  
And power in thought be as the tree within  
the seed?

Or what if Art, an ardent intercessor,  
Driving on fiery wings to Nature's  
throne, 250

Checks the great mother stooping to caress  
her,

And cries: 'Give me, thy child, dominion  
Over all height and depth'? if Life can breed  
New wants, and wealth from those who  
toil and groan,

Rend of thy gifts and hers a thousandfold  
for one! 255

## XVIII

"Come thou, but lead out of the inmost cave  
Of man's deep spirit, as the morning-star  
Beckons the Sun from the Eoan wave,<sup>1</sup>

Wisdom. I hear the pennons of her car  
Self-moving, like cloud charioted by flame; 260  
Comes she not, and come ye not,

Rulers of eternal thought,  
To judge, with solemn truth, life's ill-appor-  
tioned lot?

Blind Love, and equal Justice, and the  
Fame

Of what has been, the Hope of what will  
be? 265

O Liberty! if such could be thy name  
Wert thou disjoined from these, or they  
from thee:

If thine or theirs were treasures to be bought  
By blood or tears, have not the wise and  
free

Wept tears, and blood like tears?"—The  
solemn harmony 270

## XIX

Paused, and the Spirit of that mighty singing  
To its abyss was suddenly withdrawn;

Then, as a wild swan, when sublimely winging  
Its path athwart the thunder-smoke of  
dawn, 274

Sinks headlong through the ærial golden light  
On the heavy-sounding plain,  
When the bolt has pierced its brain;

As summer clouds dissolve, unburthened of  
their rain;

As a far taper fades with fading night, 279  
As a brief insect dies with dying day,—

My song, its pinions disarrayed of might,  
Drooped; o'er it closed the echoes far  
away

Of the great voice which did its flight sustain,

<sup>1</sup>The wave of dawn.

As waves which lately paved his watery way  
Hiss round a drowner's head in their tem-  
pestuous play. 285

ODE TO NAPLES<sup>2</sup>

## EPODE I α

I STOOD within the City disinterred;<sup>3</sup>  
And heard the autumnal leaves like light  
footfalls

Of spirits passing through the streets; and  
heard

The Mountain's<sup>4</sup> slumberous voice at  
intervals

Thrill through those roofless halls; 5  
The oracular thunder penetrating shook

The listening soul in my suspended blood;  
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—

I felt, but heard not:—through white  
columns glowed

The isle-sustaining ocean-flood, 10  
A plane of light between two heavens of azure!

Around me gleamed many a bright sepul-  
cher

Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure  
Were to spare Death, had never made era-  
sure;

But every living lineament was clear 15  
As in the sculptor's thought; and there

The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy, and pine,  
Like winter leaves o'ergrown by molded  
snow,

Seemed only not to move and grow  
Because the crystal silence of the air 20

Weighed on their life; even as the Power  
divine

Which then lulled all things, brooded upon  
mine.

## EPODE II α

Then gentle winds arose  
With many a mingled close  
Of wild Æolian sound, and mountain-odors  
keen; 25

And where the Baian ocean  
Welters with airlike motion,

Within, above, around its bowers of starry  
green,

Moving the sea-flowers in those purple  
caves,

Even as the ever stormless atmosphere 30

<sup>2</sup>Written in August, 1820; published in 1824. "The author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baia with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes which depicture these scenes, and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event" (Shelley's note).

<sup>3</sup>Pompeii.

<sup>4</sup>Vesuvius.



Floats o'er the Elysian realm,  
 It bore me, like an Angel, o'er the waves  
 Of sunlight, whose swift pinnacle of  
 dewy air  
 No storm can overwhelm.  
 I sailed, where ever flows 35  
 Under the calm Serene  
 A spirit of deep emotion  
 From the unknown graves  
 Of the dead Kings of Melody.<sup>1</sup>  
 Shadowy Aornos<sup>2</sup> darkened o'er the helm 40  
 The horizontal æther; Heaven stripped bare  
 Its depth over Elysium, where the prow  
 Made the invisible water white as snow;  
 From that Typhæan mount, Inarime,<sup>3</sup>  
 There streamed a sunbright vapor, like the  
 standard 45  
 Of some ethereal host;  
 Whilst from all the coast,  
 Louder and louder, gathering round, there  
 wandered  
 Over the oracular woods and divine sea  
 Prophesyings which grew articulate— 50  
 They seize me—I must speak them!—be they  
 fate!

## STROPHE I

Naples! thou Heart of men which ever pant-  
 est  
 Naked, beneath the lidless eye of Heaven!  
 Elysian City, which to calm enchantment  
 The mutinous air and seal they round thee,  
 even 55  
 As sleep round Love, are driven!  
 Metropolis of a ruined Paradise  
 Long lost, late won, and yet but half re-  
 gained!  
 Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,  
 Which arméd Victory offers up unstained 60  
 To Love, the flower-enchained!  
 Thou which wert once, and then didst cease  
 to be,  
 Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,  
 If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can  
 avail,—  
 Hail, hail, all hail! 65

## STROPHE II

Thou youngest giant birth  
 Which from the groaning earth  
 Leap'st, clothed in armor of impenetrable  
 scale!  
 Last of the Intercessors! 69  
 Who 'gainst the Crowned Transgressors  
 Pleadest before God's love! Arrayed in  
 Wisdom's mail,

Wave thy lightning lance in mirth  
 Nor let thy high heart fail,  
 Though from their hundred gates the leagued  
 Oppressors  
 With hurried legions move! 75  
 Hail, hail, all hail!

## ANTISTROPHE I α

What though Cimmerian Anarchs<sup>4</sup> dare blas-  
 pheme  
 Freedom and thee? thy shield is as a mirror  
 To make their blind slaves see, and with  
 fierce gleam  
 To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer;  
 A new Actæon's<sup>5</sup> error 81  
 Shall theirs have been—devoured by their  
 own hounds!  
 Be thou like the imperial Basilisk<sup>6</sup>  
 Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!  
 Gaze on Oppression, till at that dread risk  
 Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk: 86  
 Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier  
 grow,  
 And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe:—  
 If Hope, and Truth, and Justice may avail,  
 Thou shalt be great—All hail! 90

## ANTISTROPHE II α

From Freedom's form divine,  
 From Nature's inmost shrine,  
 Strip every impious gawd, rend Error veil by  
 veil;  
 O'er Ruin desolate,  
 O'er Falsehood's fallen state, 95  
 Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer  
 pale!  
 And equal laws be thine,  
 And wingéd words let sail,  
 Freighted with truth even from the throne of  
 God:  
 That wealth, surviving fate, 100  
 Be thine.—All hail!

## ANTISTROPHE I β

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling  
 pæan  
 From land to land re-echoed solemnly,  
 Till silence became music? From the Ææan<sup>7</sup>  
 To the cold Alps, eternal Italy 105  
 Starts to hear thine! The Sea  
 Which paves the desert streets of Venice laughs  
 In light and music; widowed Genoa wan  
 By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,

<sup>4</sup>The Cimmerians, according to legend, dwelt in a northern land of perpetual darkness.

<sup>5</sup>Actæon was devoured by his own hounds after he had seen Artemis bathing.

<sup>6</sup>A monster who could slay by merely looking at its victim.

<sup>7</sup>The island of Circe (Shelley's note).

<sup>1</sup>Homer and Virgil (Shelley's note).

<sup>2</sup>Hades.

<sup>3</sup>An island north-west of the Bay of Naples containing a volcanic mountain under which Typhon was said to be buried.

Murmuring, "Where is Doria?"<sup>1</sup> fair Milan,  
110

Within whose veins long ran  
The viper's<sup>2</sup> palsyng venom, lifts her heel  
To bruise his head. The signal and the seal  
(If Hope and Truth and Justice can avail)  
Art thou of all these hopes.—O hail! 115

## ANTISTROPHE II β

Florence! beneath the sun,  
Of cities fairest one,  
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expectation:

From eyes of quenchless hope  
Rome tears the priestly cope, 120  
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,—

An athlete stripped to run  
From a remoter station  
For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore:<sup>3</sup>—  
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did  
avail, 125  
So now may Fraud and Wrong! O hail!

## EPODE I β

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born  
Forms<sup>4</sup>

Arrayed against the ever-living Gods?  
The crash and darkness of a thousand storms  
Bursting their inaccessible abodes 130  
Of crags and thunder-clouds?

See ye the banners blazoned to the day,  
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride?  
Dissonant threats kill Silence far away,  
The serene Heaven which wraps our Eden  
wide 135

With iron light is dyed;  
The Anarchs of the North<sup>5</sup> lead forth their  
legions

Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating;  
An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions  
And lawless slaveries,—down the aerial regions 140

Of the white Alps, desolating,  
Famished wolves that bide no waiting,  
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,  
Trampling our columned cities into dust,  
Their dull and savage lust 145  
On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—

<sup>1</sup>Andrea Doria, an admiral who victoriously fought, early in the sixteenth century, for the independence of Genoa.

<sup>2</sup>The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan (Shelley's note).

<sup>3</sup>Brutus and Cassius at Philippi fought vainly for republican Rome against Octavius (42 B. C.).

<sup>4</sup>The Titans, sons of Earth, who warred on the gods.

<sup>5</sup>Austria and other countries.

They come! The fields they tread look black  
and hoary  
With fire—from their red feet the streams  
run gory!

## EPODE II β

Great Spirit, deepest Love!  
Which rulest and dost move 150  
All things which live and are, within the  
Italian shore;

Who spreadest Heaven around it,  
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;  
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western  
floor;

Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command 155  
The sunbeams and the showers distil its  
foison

From the Earth's bosom chill;  
Oh, bid those beams be each a blinding brand  
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of  
poison!

Bid the Earth's plenty kill! 160  
Bid thy bright Heaven above,  
Whilst light and darkness bound it,  
Be their tomb who planned  
To make it ours and thine!

Or, with thine harmonizing ardors fill 165  
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon  
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—  
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire  
The instrument to work thy will divine!

Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes  
from leopards, 170

And frowns and fears from thee,  
Would not more swiftly flee

Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian<sup>6</sup>  
shepherds.—

Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine  
Thou yieldest or withholdest, oh, let be 175  
This city of thy worship ever free!

SONNET<sup>7</sup>

YE HASTEN to the grave! What seek ye there,  
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes  
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery  
wear?

O thou quick heart, which pantest to possess  
All that pale Expectation feigneth fair! 5  
Thou vainly curious mind which wouldest  
guess

Whence thou didst come, and whither thou  
must go,

And all that never yet was known would  
know—

Oh, whither hasten ye, that thus ye press,

<sup>6</sup>Italian.

<sup>7</sup>Written in 1820, published by Leigh Hunt in 1823.

With such swift feet life's green and pleasant  
 path,  
 Seeking, alike from happiness and woe,  
 A refuge in the cavern of gray death?  
 O heart, and mind, and thoughts! what thing  
 do you  
 Hope to inherit in the grave below?

### GOOD-NIGHT<sup>1</sup>

I  
 GOOD-NIGHT? ah! no; the hour is ill  
 Which severs those it should unite;  
 Let us remain together still,  
 Then it will be *good* night.

II  
 How can I call the lone night good,  
 Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?  
 Be it not said, thought, understood—  
 Then it will be—*good* night.

III  
 To hearts which near each other move  
 From evening close to morning light,  
 The night is good; because, my love,  
 They never *say* good-night.

### TO NIGHT<sup>2</sup>

I  
 SWIFTLY walk o'er the western wave,  
 Spirit of Night!  
 Out of the misty eastern cave,  
 Where, all the long and lone daylight,  
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
 Which make thee terrible and dear,—  
 Swift be thy flight!

II  
 Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,  
 Star-inwrought!  
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;  
 Kiss her until she be wearied out,  
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,  
 Touching all with thine opiate wand—  
 Come, long-sought!

III  
 When I arose and saw the dawn,  
 I sighed for thee;  
 When light rode high, and the dew was gone,  
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,  
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,  
 Lingering like an unloved guest,  
 I sighed for thee.

IV  
 Thy brother Death came, and cried,  
 Wouldst thou me?  
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,  
 Murmured like a noontide bee,  
 Shall I nestle near thy side?  
 Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,  
 No, not thee!

V  
 Death will come when thou art dead,  
 Soon, too soon—  
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;  
 Of neither would I ask the boon  
 I ask of thee, beloved Night—  
 Swift be thine approaching flight,  
 Come soon, soon!

### TIME<sup>3</sup>

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are years,  
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe  
 Are brackish with the salt of human tears!  
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and  
 flow  
 Claspest the limits of mortality,  
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,  
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable  
 shore;  
 Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,  
 Who shall put forth on thee,  
 Unfathomable Sea?

### TO——<sup>4</sup>

MUSIC, when soft voices die,  
 Vibrates in the memory—  
 Odors, when sweet violets sicken,  
 Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
 Are heaped for the beloved's bed;  
 And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,  
 Love itself shall slumber on.

### SONG<sup>5</sup>

I  
 RARELY, rarely, comest thou,  
 Spirit of Delight!  
 Wherefore hast thou left me now  
 Many a day and night?  
 Many a weary night and day  
 'Tis since thou art fled away.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1820, published by Hunt in 1822.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.

<sup>5</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.



## II

How shall ever one like me  
 Win thee back again?  
 With the joyous and the free  
 Thou wilt scoff at pain. 10  
 Spirit false! thou hast forgot  
 All but those who need thee not.

## III

As a lizard with the shade  
 Of a trembling leaf,  
 Thou with sorrow art dismayed; 15  
 Even the sighs of grief  
 Reproach thee, that thou art not near,  
 And reproach thou wilt not hear.

## IV

Let me set my mournful ditty  
 To a merry measure; 20  
 Thou wilt never come for pity,  
 Thou wilt come for pleasure;  
 Pity then will cut away  
 Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

## V

I love all that thou lovest, 25  
 Spirit of Delight!  
 The fresh Earth in new leaves dressed,  
 And the starry night;  
 Autumn evening, and the morn  
 When the golden mists are born. 30

## VI

I love snow, and all the forms  
 Of the radiant frost;  
 I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
 Everything almost  
 Which is Nature's, and may be 35  
 Untainted by man's misery.

## VII

I love tranquil solitude,  
 And such society  
 As is quiet, wise, and good;  
 Between thee and me 40  
 What difference? but thou dost possess  
 The things I seek, not love them less.

## VIII

I love Love—though he has wings,  
 And like light can flee,  
 But above all other things, 45  
 Spirit, I love thee—  
 Thou art love and life! Oh, come,  
 Make once more my heart thy home.

MUTABILITY<sup>1</sup>

## I

THE flower that smiles to-day  
 To-morrow dies;  
 All that we wish to stay  
 Tempts and then flies.  
 What is this world's delight? 5  
 Lightning that mocks the night,  
 Brief even as bright.

## II

Virtue, how frail it is!  
 Friendship how rare!  
 Love, how it sells poor bliss 10  
 For proud despair!  
 But we, though soon they fall,  
 Survive their joy, and all  
 Which ours we call.

## III

Whilst skies are blue and bright, 15  
 Whilst flowers are gay,  
 Whilst eyes that change ere night  
 Make glad the day;  
 Whilst yet the calm hours creep,  
 Dream thou—and from thy sleep 20  
 Then wake to weep.

POLITICAL GREATNESS<sup>2</sup>

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,  
 Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or  
 arts,  
 Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes  
 tame;  
 Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,  
 History is but the shadow of their shame, 5  
 Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts  
 As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,  
 Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery  
 Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit  
 By force or custom? Man who man would be,  
 Must rule the empire of himself; in it 11  
 Must be supreme, establishing his throne  
 On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy  
 Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

A LAMENT<sup>3</sup>

## I

O WORLD! O life! O time!  
 On whose last steps I climb,  
 Trembling at that where I had stood before;  
 When will return the glory of your prime?  
 No more—Oh, never more! 5

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.<sup>2</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.<sup>3</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.

## II

Out of the day and night  
 A joy has taken flight;  
 Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,  
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with de-  
 light  
 No more—Oh, never more! 10

TO——<sup>1</sup>

## I

ONE word is too often profaned  
 For me to profane it,  
 One feeling too falsely disdained  
 For thee to disdain it;  
 One hope is too like despair 5  
 For prudence to smother,  
 And pity from thee more dear  
 Than that from another.

## II

I can give not what men call love,  
 But wilt thou accept not 10  
 The worship the heart lifts above  
 And the Heavens reject not,—  
 The desire of the moth for the star,  
 Of the night for the morrow,  
 The devotion to something afar 15  
 From the sphere of our sorrow?

ADONAIS<sup>2</sup>

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS,  
 AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC.

Ἀστήρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζωοῖσιν Ἐφῶς.  
 νῦν δὲ θανάων λάμπεις Ἑσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις.  
 —PLATO.<sup>3</sup>

## PREFACE

Φάρμακον ἦλθε, Βίων, ποτὶ σὸν στόμα,  
 φάρμακον εἶδες.  
 πῶς τευ τοῖς χεῖλεσσι ποτέδραμε, κοῖν  
 ἐγλυκάνθη;  
 τίς δὲ βροτὸς τοσσούτον ἀνάμερος, ἢ κεράσαι  
 τοι,  
 ἢ δοῦναι λαλέοντι τὸ φάρμακον; ἐκφυγεῖ  
 ῥᾶν. —MOSCHUS, EPITAPH. BION.<sup>4</sup>

It is my intention to subjoin to the London  
 edition of this poem a criticism upon the  
 claims of its lamented object to be classed

among the writers of the highest genius who  
 have adorned our age. My known repug-  
 nance to the narrow principles of taste on  
 which several of his earlier compositions were  
 modeled proves at least that I am an impar-  
 tial judge. I consider the fragment of  
*Hyperion* as second to nothing that was ever  
 produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome of a consump-  
 tion, in his twenty-fourth year, on the—  
 of — 1821; and was buried in the romantic  
 and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in  
 that city, under the pyramid which is the  
 tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and  
 towers, now moldering and desolate, which  
 formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The  
 cemetery is an open space among the ruins,  
 covered in winter with violets and daisies.  
 It might make one in love with death, to  
 think that one should be buried in so sweet  
 a place.

The genius of the lamented person to  
 whose memory I have dedicated these un-  
 worthy verses was not less delicate and  
 fragile than it was beautiful; and where  
 cankerworms abound, what wonder if its  
 young flower was blighted in the bud? The  
 savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which  
 appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced  
 the most violent effect on his susceptible  
 mind; the agitation thus originated ended  
 in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs;  
 a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeed-

was, during Shelley's lifetime, no London edition such as is  
 mentioned in the first sentence of the Preface. When he  
 wrote the Preface Shelley did not know the exact time of  
 Keats's death. He shared, too, the incorrect impression cur-  
 rent at the time that adverse criticism had brought about  
 Keats's illness. (Concerning this see the introductory note to  
 Keats's poems, below.) Keats and Shelley had met each  
 other at the house of Leigh Hunt, but had never seen much  
 of each other. *Adonais* is not the result of a feeling of warm  
 personal friendship so much as of Shelley's recognition of the  
 similarity between his own life and that of Keats. While  
 the poem was in progress he wrote: "I have been engaged  
 these last days in composing a poem on the death of Keats,  
 which will shortly be finished. . . . It is a highly wrought  
*piece of art*, and perhaps better in point of composition than  
 anything I have written." The poem is modeled on the Greek  
 pastoral elegy, and Shelley is particularly indebted to Bion's  
*Lament for Adonis* and Moschus's *Elegy on the Death of Bion*.

<sup>3</sup>Thou wert the morning star among the living,

Ere thy fair light had died;—

Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving  
 New splendor to the dead.

(Shelley's translation.)

<sup>4</sup>Poison came, Bion, to thy mouth—thou didst know poison.  
 To such lips as thine did it come, and was not sweetened?  
 What mortal was so cruel that could mix poison for thee, or  
 who could give thee the venom that heard thy voice? Surely  
 he had no music in his soul (Lang's translation).

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1821, published in 1824.

<sup>2</sup>Written at Pisa during the early days of June, 1821, and  
 published at Pisa in the middle of July in the same year.  
 Part of the edition was sent to be sold in London, but there

ing acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows or one like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to *Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, *Paris*, and *Woman*, and a *Syrian Tale*, and Mrs. Lefanu, and Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men who in their venal good nature presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the *Elegy* was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion* was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more

solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career—may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!

## I

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!  
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow, say:  
"With me  
Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

## 2

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when  
he lay,  
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft  
which flies  
In darkness? where was lorn Urania!  
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,  
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise  
She sat, while one, with soft enamored  
breath,  
Rekindled all the fading melodies,  
With which, like flowers that mock the  
corse beneath,  
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of  
Death.

## 3

Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!  
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!  
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed  
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,  
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;  
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair  
Descend;—oh, dream not that the amorous  
Deep  
Will yet restore him to the vital air;  
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at  
our despair.

<sup>1</sup>The heavenly muse, to whom Milton appeals in *Paradise Lost*, or, more probably, the Uranian Aphrodite, spirit of heavenly love.



## 4

Most musical of mourners, weep again!  
Lament anew, Urania!—he<sup>1</sup> died,  
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain, 30  
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's  
pride,  
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,  
Trampled and mocked with many a loathed  
rite  
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,  
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite 35  
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third<sup>2</sup> among the  
sons of light.

## 5

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!  
Not all to that bright station dared to  
climb;  
And happier they their happiness who  
knew,  
Whose tapers yet burn through that night  
of time 40  
In which suns perished; others more sub-  
lime,  
Struck by the envious wrath of man or god,  
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;  
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,  
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's  
serene abode. 45

## 6

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has  
perished—  
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,  
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden  
cherished,  
And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew;  
Most musical of mourners, weep anew! 50  
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the  
last,  
The bloom, whose petals, nipped before  
they blew,  
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;  
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

## 7

To that high Capital,<sup>3</sup> where kingly Death  
Keeps his pale court in beauty and de-  
cay, 56  
He came; and bought, with price of purest  
breath,  
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!  
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day  
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still 60  
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;

<sup>1</sup>Milton.<sup>2</sup>The first and second, if one may judge from Shelley's  
*Defense of Poetry*, were Homer and Dante.<sup>3</sup>Rome.

Awake him not! surely he takes his fill  
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

## 8

He will awake no more, oh, never more!—  
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace  
The shadow of white Death, and at the  
door 66  
Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;  
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe  
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to de-  
face 70  
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law  
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal  
curtain draw.

## 9

Oh, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,  
The passion-winged Ministers of thought,  
Who were his flocks, whom near the living  
streams 75  
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he  
taught  
The love which was its music, wander not,—  
Wander no more, from kindling brain to  
brain,  
But droop there, whence they sprung; and  
mourn their lot  
Round the cold heart, where, after their  
sweet pain, 80  
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a  
home again.

## 10

And one with trembling hands clasps his  
cold head,  
And fans him with her moonlight wings,  
and cries;  
“Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not  
dead;  
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes, 85  
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies  
A tear some Dream has loosened from his  
brain.”  
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!  
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no  
stain  
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its  
rain. 90

## 11

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
Washed his light limbs as if embalming  
them;  
Another clipped her profuse locks, and  
threw  
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Garland.

Which frozen tears instead of pearls be-  
gem; <sup>95</sup>

Another in her willful grief would break  
Her bow and wingéd reeds, as if to stem  
A greater loss with one which was more  
weak;  
And dull the barbéd fire against his frozen  
cheek.

12

Another Splendor on his mouth alit, <sup>100</sup>  
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw  
the breath

Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded  
wit,

And pass into the panting heart beneath  
With lightning and with music: the damp  
death

Quenched its caress upon his icy lips; <sup>105</sup>  
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath  
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night  
clips,<sup>1</sup>

It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed  
to its eclipse.

13

And others came . . . Desires and  
Adorations,

Wingéd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,  
Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering  
Incarnations <sup>111</sup>

Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phanta-  
sies;

And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the  
gleam

Of her own dying smile instead of eyes, <sup>115</sup>  
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp  
might seem

Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal  
stream.

14

All he had loved, and molded into thought,  
From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet  
sound,

Lamented Adonais. Morning sought <sup>120</sup>  
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair un-  
bound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn  
the ground,

Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;  
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,  
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay, <sup>125</sup>

And the wild Winds flew round, sobbing in  
their dismay.

15

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless moun-  
tains,

And feeds her grief with his remembered  
lay,

And will no more reply to winds or foun-  
tains,

Or amorous birds perched on the young  
green spray, <sup>130</sup>

Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;  
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear  
Than those for whose disdain she pined  
away<sup>2</sup>

Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear  
Murmur, between their songs, is all the wood-  
men hear. <sup>135</sup>

16

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she  
threw down

Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,  
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is  
flown,

For whom should she have waked the sul-  
len year?

To Phœbus was not Hyacinth<sup>3</sup> so dear <sup>140</sup>  
Nor to himself Narcissus,<sup>4</sup> as to both

Thou, Adonais: wan they stand and sere  
Amid the faint companions of their youth,

With dew all turned to tears; odor, to sighing  
ruth.

17

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale <sup>145</sup>  
Mourns not her mate with such melodious  
pain;

Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale  
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's  
domain

Her mighty youth with morning, doth com-  
plain,

Soaring and screaming round her empty  
nest, <sup>150</sup>

As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain  
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent  
breast,<sup>5</sup>

And scared the angel soul that was its earthly  
guest!

<sup>2</sup>Than those of Narcissus, because of whose disdain she  
pined away, etc.

<sup>3</sup>A youth loved by Apollo, who changed him, when he  
died, into a flower.

<sup>4</sup>After disdainning Echo and other nymphs, Narcissus was  
punished by falling in love with his own reflected image. At  
his death he was changed into a flower.

<sup>5</sup>J. W. Croker, the author of the anonymous paper on  
*Endymion* in the *Quarterly Review* which Shelley and other  
contemporaries believed to have been the proximate cause of  
Keats's death.

18

Ah, woe is me! Winter is come and gone,  
 But grief returns with the revolving year;  
 The airs and streams renew their joyous  
 tone; <sup>156</sup>  
 The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;  
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead  
 Season's bier;  
 The amorous birds now pair in every brake,  
 And build their mossy homes in field and  
 brere;<sup>1</sup> <sup>160</sup>  
 And the green lizard, and the golden snake,  
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance  
 awake.

19

Through wood and stream and field and  
 hill and Ocean  
 A quickening life from the Earth's heart  
 has burst  
 As it has ever done, with change and mo-  
 tion, <sup>165</sup>  
 From the great morning of the world when  
 first  
 God dawned on Chaos; in its stream im-  
 mersed,  
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer  
 light;  
 All baser things pant with life's sacred  
 thirst;  
 Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's  
 delight, <sup>170</sup>  
 The beauty and the joy of their renewed  
 might.

20

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit  
 tender,  
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;  
 Like incarnations of the stars, when splen-  
 dor  
 Is changed to fragrance, they illumine  
 death <sup>175</sup>  
 And mock the merry worm that wakes  
 beneath;  
 Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone  
 which knows  
 Be as a sword consumed before the sheath  
 By sightless<sup>2</sup> lightning?—the intense atom  
 glows  
 A moment, then is quenched in a most cold  
 repose. <sup>180</sup>

21

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,  
 But for our grief, as if it had not been,  
 And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!  
 Whence are we, and why are we? of what  
 scene

The actors or spectators? Great and near:  
 Meet massed in death, who lends what  
 life must borrow. <sup>186</sup>  
 As long as skies are blue, and fields are  
 green,  
 Evening must usher night, night urge the  
 morrow,  
 Month follow month with woe, and year wake  
 year to sorrow.

22

*He* will awake no more, oh, never more! <sup>190</sup>  
 "Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless  
 Mother, rise  
 Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's  
 core,  
 A wound more fierce than his, with tears  
 and sighs."  
 And all the Dreams that watched Urania's  
 eyes, <sup>194</sup>  
 And all the Echoes whom their sister's song  
 Had held in holy silence, cried: "Arise!"  
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory  
 stung,  
 From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor  
 sprung.

23

She rose like an autumnal Night, that  
 springs <sup>199</sup>  
 Out of the East, and follows wild and drear  
 The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,  
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
 Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and  
 fear  
 So struck, so roused, so rapped Urania; <sup>204</sup>  
 So saddened round her like an atmosphere  
 Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way  
 Even to the mournful place where Adonais  
 lay.

24

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
 Through camps and cities rough with stone,  
 and steel, <sup>209</sup>  
 And human hearts, which to her aery tread  
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
 Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:  
 And barbéd tongues, and thoughts more  
 sharp than they,  
 Rent the soft Form, they never could repel,  
 Whose sacred blood, like the young tears  
 of May, <sup>215</sup>  
 Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving  
 way.

25

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,  
 Shamed by the presence of that living Might,  
 Blushed to annihilation, and the breath  
 Revisited those lips, and Life's pale light <sup>220</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Brier.<sup>2</sup>Invisible.



Flashed through those limbs, so late her  
dear delight.

"Leave me not wild and drear and comfort-  
less,

As silent lightning leaves the starless night!  
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress  
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and  
met her vain caress. 225

26

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;  
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;  
And in my heartless breast and burning  
brain

That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else  
survive, 229

With food of saddest memory kept alive,  
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part  
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give  
All that I am to be as thou now art!  
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence  
depart!

27

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert, 235  
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of  
men

Too soon, and with weak hands though  
mighty heart

Dare the unpastured dragon<sup>1</sup> in his den?  
Defenseless as thou wert, oh, where was  
then

Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the  
spear? 240

Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when  
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent  
sphere,

The monsters of life's waste had fled from  
thee like deer.

28

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;  
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the  
dead; 245

The vultures to the conqueror's banner true  
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,  
And whose wings rain contagion;—how  
they fled,

When, like Apollo, from his golden bow  
The Pythian of the age<sup>2</sup> one arrow sped 250  
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second  
blow,

They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them  
lying low.

<sup>1</sup>The world of men.

<sup>2</sup>Apollo was called the Pythian because he slew the Python. Shelley here applies the epithet to Byron, who attacked the reviewers in his satirical poem *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

29

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles  
spawn;

He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
Is gathered into death without a dawn, 255  
And the immortal stars awake again;  
So it is in the world of living men:

A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight  
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and  
when

It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared  
its light 260

Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful  
night."

30

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shep-  
herds came,

Their garlands sere, their magic mantles  
rent;

The Pilgrim of Eternity,<sup>3</sup> whose fame  
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,  
An early but enduring monument, 266  
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song  
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent

The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,<sup>4</sup>  
And Love taught Grief to fall like music from  
his tongue. 270

31

Midst others of less note, came one frail  
Form,<sup>5</sup>

A phantom among men; companionless  
As the last cloud of an expiring storm  
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,  
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,  
Actæon-like,<sup>6</sup> and now he fled astray 276  
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilder-  
ness,

And his own thoughts, along that rugged  
way,

Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and  
their prey.

32

A pardlike<sup>7</sup> Spirit beautiful and swift— 280  
A Love in desolation masked;—a Power  
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarce  
uplift

The weight of the superincumbent hour;  
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower, 284  
A breaking billow;—even whilst we speak  
Is it not broken? On the withering flower

<sup>3</sup>Byron, so called because of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. Cf. III, 70, 8, of *Childe Harold*.

<sup>4</sup>*I. e.*, Ireland sent Thomas Moore.

<sup>5</sup>Shelley.

<sup>6</sup>Actæon was torn to pieces by his own hounds after he had seen Artemis bathing.

<sup>7</sup>Leopard-like.

The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek  
The life can burn in blood, even while the  
heart may break.

## 33

His head was bound with pansies overblown,  
And faded violets, white, and pied, and  
blue; 290  
And a light spear topped with a cypress  
cone,  
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses  
grew  
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,  
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of  
that crew 295  
He came the last, neglected and apart;  
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's  
dart.

## 34

All stood aloof, and at his partial<sup>1</sup> moan  
Smiled through their tears; well knew that  
gentle band  
Who in another's fate now wept his own, 300  
As in the accents of an unknown land  
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned  
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who  
art thou?"  
He answered not, but with a sudden hand  
Made bare his branded and ensanguined  
brow, 305  
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—oh! that  
it should be so!

## 35

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?  
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle  
thrown?  
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-  
bed,  
In mockery of monumental stone, 310  
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?  
If it be He,<sup>2</sup> who, gentlest of the wise,  
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the de-  
parted one,  
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,  
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

## 36

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh! 316  
What deaf and viperous murderer could  
crown  
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?  
The nameless worm<sup>3</sup> would now itself dis-  
own:

It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone 320  
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and  
wrong,  
But what was howling in one breast alone,  
Silent with expectation of the song,  
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver  
lyre unstrung. 324

## 37

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!  
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,  
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!  
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!  
And ever at thy season be thou free  
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er-  
flow: 330  
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to  
thee;  
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret  
brow,  
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt  
—as now.

## 38

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled  
Far from these carrion kites that scream  
below; 335  
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;  
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting  
now.—  
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall  
flow  
Back to the burning fountain whence it  
came,  
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow  
Through time and change, unquenchably  
the same, 341  
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid  
hearth of shame.

## 39

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not  
sleep—  
He hath awakened from the dream of life—  
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep  
With phantoms an unprofitable strife, 346  
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's  
knife  
Invulnerable nothings.—*We* decay  
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief  
Convulse us and consume us day by day,  
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our  
living clay. 351

## 40

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;  
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,  
And that unrest which men miscall delight,  
Can touch him not and torture not again;

<sup>1</sup>Fond. <sup>2</sup>Leigh Hunt.

<sup>3</sup>The *Quarterly* reviewer; see note to stanza 17 above.

From the contagion of the world's slow  
 stain 356  
 He is secure, and now can never mourn  
 A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in  
 vain;  
 Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to  
 burn,  
 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

41

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not  
 he; 361  
 Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young  
 Dawn,  
 Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee  
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;  
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!  
 Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and  
 thou Air, 366  
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst  
 thrown  
 O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare  
 Even to the joyous stars which smile on its  
 despair! 369

42

He is made one with Nature: there is heard  
 His voice in all her music, from the moan  
 Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet  
 bird;  
 He is a presence to be felt and known  
 In darkness and in light, from herb and  
 stone,  
 Spreading itself where'er that Power may  
 move 375  
 Which has withdrawn his being to its own;  
 Which wields the world with never-weariéd  
 love,  
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

43

He is a portion of the loveliness  
 Which once he made more lovely: he doth  
 bear 380  
 His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress  
 Sweeps through the dull dense world, com-  
 pelling there,  
 All new successions to the forms they wear;  
 Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks  
 its flight 384  
 To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;  
 And bursting in its beauty and its might  
 From trees and beasts and men into the  
 Heaven's light.

44

The splendors of the firmament of time  
 May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;

Like stars to their appointed height they  
 climb, 390  
 And death is a low mist which cannot blot  
 The brightness it may veil. When lofty  
 thought  
 Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,  
 And love and life contend in it, for what  
 Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live  
 there 395  
 And move like winds of light on dark and  
 stormy air.

45

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
 Rose from their thrones, built beyond mor-  
 tal thought,  
 Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton!  
 Rose pale,—his solemn agony had not 400  
 Yet faded from him; Sidney,<sup>2</sup> as he fought  
 And as he fell and as he lived and loved  
 Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
 Arose; and Lucan,<sup>3</sup> by his death approved:  
 Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing re-  
 proved. 405

46

And many more, whose names on Earth are  
 dark,  
 But whose transmitted effluence cannot die  
 So long as fire outlives the parent spark,  
 Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.  
 "Thou art become as one of us," they cry,  
 "It was for thee yon kingless sphere has  
 long 411  
 Swung blind in unascended majesty,  
 Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.  
 Assume thy wingéd throne, thou Vesper of  
 our throng!"

47

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh, come forth,  
 Fond wretch! and know thyself and him  
 aright. 416  
 Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous  
 Earth;  
 As from a center, dart thy spirit's light  
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might  
 Sate the void circumference: then shrink  
 Even to a point within our day and night;  
 And keep thy heart light lest it make thee  
 sink 422  
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee  
 to the brink.

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), who died by his own hand.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), who died from a wound received in battle.

<sup>3</sup>Roman poet (A. D. 39-65), who committed suicide to escape execution commanded by Nero.



48

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulcher,  
 Oh, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought  
 That ages, empires, and religions there<sup>426</sup>  
 Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;  
 For such as he can lend,—they borrow not  
 Glory from those who made the world their  
 prey;  
 And he is gathered to the kings of thought  
 Who waged contention with their time's  
 decay,<sup>431</sup>  
 And of the past are all that cannot pass  
 away.

49

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,  
 The grave, the city, and the wilderness;  
 And where its wrecks like shattered moun-  
 tains rise,<sup>435</sup>  
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant cosses  
 dress  
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness  
 Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead  
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access  
 Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead  
 A light of laughing flowers along the grass is  
 spread;<sup>441</sup>

50

And gray walls molder round, on which  
 dull Time  
 Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;  
 And one keen pyramid with wedge sub-  
 lime,  
 Pavilions the dust of him who planned<sup>445</sup>  
 This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
 Like flame transformed to marble; and be-  
 neath,  
 A field is spread, on which a newer band  
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp  
 of death,  
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce extin-  
 guished breath.<sup>450</sup>

51

Here pause: these graves are all too young  
 as yet  
 To have outgrown the sorrow which con-  
 signed  
 Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,  
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,  
 Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou  
 find<sup>455</sup>  
 Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,  
 Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter  
 wind  
 Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
 What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

52

The One remains, the many change and  
 pass;<sup>460</sup>  
 Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's  
 shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.—  
 Die,  
 If thou wouldest be with that which thou  
 dost seek!<sup>465</sup>  
 Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure  
 sky,  
 Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are  
 weak  
 The glory they transfuse with fitting truth  
 to speak.

53

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,  
 my Heart?  
 Thy hopes are gone before: from all things  
 here<sup>470</sup>  
 They have departed; thou shouldst now  
 depart!  
 A light is passed from the revolving year,  
 And man, and woman; and what still is dear  
 Attracts to crush, repels to make thee  
 wither.  
 The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whis-  
 pers near;<sup>475</sup>  
 'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,  
 No more let Life divide what Death can join  
 together.

54

That Light whose smile kindles the Uni-  
 verse,  
 That Beauty in which all things work and  
 move,  
 That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse  
 Of birth can quench not, that sustaining  
 Love<sup>481</sup>  
 Which through the web of being blindly  
 wove  
 By man and beast and earth and air and  
 sea,  
 Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
 The fire for which all thirst; now beams on  
 me,<sup>485</sup>  
 Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

55

The breath whose might I have invoked in  
 song  
 Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,  
 Far from the shore, far from the trembling  
 throng  
 Whose sails were never to the tempest  
 given;<sup>490</sup>

The massy earth and spheréd skies are  
 riven!  
 I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;  
 Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of  
 Heaven,  
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
 Beacons from the abode where the Eternal  
 are.

495

# HELLAS<sup>1</sup>

## THE FINAL CHORUS

THE world's great age begins anew,  
 The golden years return,  
 The earth doth like a snake renew  
 Her winter weeds outworn:  
 Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,  
 Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

6

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains  
 From waves serener far;  
 A new Peneus<sup>2</sup> rolls his fountains  
 Against the morning star.  
 Where fairer Tempes<sup>3</sup> bloom, there sleep  
 Young Cyclads<sup>4</sup> on a sunnier deep.

10

A loftier Argo<sup>5</sup> cleaves the main,  
 Fraught with a later prize;  
 Another Orpheus sings again,  
 And loves, and weeps, and dies.  
 A new Ulysses leaves once more  
 Calypso<sup>6</sup> for his native shore.

15

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,  
 If earth Death's scroll must be!  
 Nor mix with Laian<sup>7</sup> rage the joy  
 Which dawns upon the free:  
 Although a subtler Sphinx renew  
 Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

20

Another Athens shall arise,  
 And to remoter time  
 Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,  
 The splendor of its prime;  
 And leave, if nought so bright may live,  
 All earth can take or Heaven can give.

25

30

<sup>1</sup>A lyrical drama, written in the autumn of 1821 and published in the spring of 1822; inspired by the Greek war for independence, which Shelley thinks of as ushering in a new Golden Age which will surpass the ancient glories of Greece.

<sup>2</sup>A river of Thessaly.

<sup>3</sup>The valley through which the Peneus flows.

<sup>4</sup>The Cyclades, islands in the Ægean Sea.

<sup>5</sup>The ship of Jason, in which the Golden Fleece was carried.

<sup>6</sup>The nymph who vainly sought to keep Ulysses on her island with her, though she promised him immortality if he would remain.

<sup>7</sup>The family of Laius, king of Thebes, was pursued by dreadful misfortunes. The son of Laius was Œdipus, who freed Thebes from the affliction of the Sphinx by answering her riddle correctly, but who unwittingly killed his father and married his mother.

Saturn and Love their long repose  
 Shall burst,<sup>8</sup> more bright and good  
 Than all who fell, than One who rose,  
 Than many unsubdued:  
 Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,  
 But votive tears and symbol flowers.

35

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?  
 Cease! must men kill and die?  
 Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn  
 Of bitter prophecy.  
 The world is weary of the past,  
 Oh, might it die or rest at last!

40

## LINES: "WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED"<sup>9</sup>

### I

WHEN the lamp is shattered  
 The light in the dust lies dead—  
 When the cloud is scattered  
 The rainbow's glory is shed.  
 When the lute is broken,  
 Sweet tones are remembered not;  
 When the lips have spoken,  
 Loved accents are soon forgot.

5

### II

As music and splendor  
 Survive not the lamp and the lute,  
 The heart's echoes render  
 No song when the spirit is mute:—  
 No song but sad dirges,  
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,  
 Or the mournful surges  
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

15

<sup>8</sup>Saturn and Love were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence and happiness. *All those who fell*, or the Gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; the *One who rose*, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the Pagan World were amerced of their worship; and the *many unsubdued*, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning, perpetually increasing, activity. The Grecian gods seem indeed to have been personally more innocent, although it cannot be said, that as far as temperance and chastity are concerned, they gave so edifying an example as their successor. The sublime human character of Jesus Christ was deformed by an imputed identification with a Power, who tempted, betrayed, and punished the innocent beings who were called into existence by His sole will; and for the period of a thousand years, the spirit of this most just, wise, and benevolent of men has been propitiated with myriads of hecatombs of those who approached the nearest to His innocence and wisdom, sacrificed under every aggravation of atrocity and variety of torture. The horrors of the Mexican, the Peruvian, and the Indian superstitions are well known (Shelley's note).

<sup>9</sup>Written in 1822, published in 1824.

## III

When hearts have once mingled  
 Love first leaves the well-built nest;  
 The weak one is singled  
 To endure what it once possessed. 20  
 O Love! who bewailest  
 The frailty of all things here,  
 Why choose you the frailest  
 For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

## IV

Its passions will rock thee  
 As the storms rock the ravens on high; 25  
 Bright reason will mock thee,  
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.

From thy nest every rafter  
 Will rot, and thine eagle home 30  
 Leave thee naked to laughter,  
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.

A DIRGE<sup>1</sup>

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud  
 Grief too sad for song;  
 Wild wind, when sullen cloud  
 Knells all the night long;  
 Sad storm, whose tears are vain, 5  
 Bare woods, whose branches strain,  
 Deep caves and dreary main,—  
 Wail, for the world's wrong!

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1822, published in 1824.



## JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

Keats's father was stable-keeper at the Swan and Hoop Inn, Finsbury Pavement, London. He had married the daughter of the proprietor, and Keats was born there on 29 or 31 October, 1795. In 1803 Keats was sent to a good private school kept by the Rev. J. Clarke at Enfield. Here he attracted the attention of the junior master, Charles Cowden Clarke, and a relationship sprang up which extended beyond his period at the school and was of great use to him. Clarke later said that Keats, although during his last years at school an eager reader of history, fiction, and books of mythology, was also a sturdy, active youngster and a favorite among his school-fellows. In 1804 Keats's father was killed by a fall from his horse, and in 1810 his mother—who in 1805 had married a second time and in the following year had separated from her husband—died of a consumption. Keats's guardians at once removed him from school and apprenticed him to a surgeon. His passion for reading did not leave him in his new work and surroundings, and he kept in touch with the Clarks. It was in 1812 or 1813 that Cowden Clarke introduced him to the works of Spenser, reading to him Spenser's *Epithalamion* and lending him the *Faerie Queene*. A couple of years later it was also Clarke who introduced him to Chapman's *Homer*, which inspired the famous sonnet. Meanwhile Keats had in 1814 broken his apprenticeship and had gone to London to study medicine. Soon after this he began to write poetry, though continuing his medical studies. In 1816, through the instrumentality of Clarke, he met Leigh Hunt, a pleasant but superficial literary man and a champion of liberty. Hunt communicated his zeal for liberty to Keats and also encouraged the false taste evident in Keats's earlier poetry, but Hunt also by his interest did much to stimulate his genius and, too, introduced him to many of the literary men and artists of the time. Directly or indirectly through Hunt, Keats became acquainted with Benjamin Haydon—a mediocre artist but a man of fine taste who helped Keats to appreciate Greek sculpture—with J. H. Reynolds, Shelley, Horace Smith, Hazlitt, C. Wentworth Dilke, Wordsworth, and others.

In 1817 Keats published his first volume, *Poems*, a volume which on the whole showed much immaturity and which was harshly criticized. This, however, hardly discouraged him, for his own critical faculty was developing and he saw many of his faults as clearly as did his critics. In 1816 when he had come of age he had determined to

abandon medicine for poetry, and there is no sign that he ever wavered concerning the rightness of this decision. In 1818 he published *Endymion*. He was dissatisfied with it, but felt that it was as good a poem as he could then write, and that it was better to put it out of his reach by publication than to attempt to mend it. In a preface he said as much;—any reader of the poem, he said, "must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished." But despite this admission the poem was greeted with extreme abuse by the critics—abuse so extreme that at the time it was reputed to have been a cause of Keats's early death. This, as we now know, it was not. Keats's reaction to criticism can only be described as fine and manly. As for hostile critics, he wrote to his publisher several months after the appearance of the poem, "I begin to get a little acquainted with my own strength and weakness. Praise or blame has but a momentary effect on the man whose love of beauty in the abstract makes him a severe critic on his own works. My own domestic criticism has given me pain without comparison beyond what *Blackwood* or the *Quarterly* could possibly inflict—and also when I feel I am right, no external praise can give me such a glow as my own solitary re-perception and ratification of what is fine. J. S. [the writer of a letter about the poem to the *Morning Chronicle*] is perfectly right in regard to the slipshod *Endymion*. That it is so is no fault of mine. No!—though it may sound a little paradoxical. It is as good as I had power to make it—by myself. Had I been nervous about its being a perfect piece, and with that view asked advice, and trembled over every page, it would not have been written; for it is not in my nature to fumble—I will write independently.—I have written independently *without judgment*. I may write independently, and *with judgment*, hereafter. The Genius of Poetry must work out its own salvation in a man: It cannot be matured by law and precept, but by sensation and watchfulness in itself. That which is creative must create itself. In *Endymion* I leaped headlong into the sea, and thereby have become better acquainted with the soundings, the quicksands, and the rocks, than if I had stayed upon the green shore, and piped a silly pipe, and took tea and comfortable advice."

Already, indeed, before *Endymion* was published Keats was at work upon *Isabella* in the attempt to do something better. In the summer of 1818 he

went with his friend Charles Brown on a walking tour through the Lake country to Scotland. After about six weeks of tramping he was compelled to return to London on account of throat trouble which had developed. This was the first warning sign of the illness which was to cut his life short. In the fall of this year he first met Fanny Brawne, a girl with whom he fell deeply in love. He was also during the fall of this year in constant attendance at the bedside of his brother Tom, who died of consumption in December. Early in 1819 Keats was at work on *Hyperion* and *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and during the spring and fall he wrote the greater number of his finest poems. In February, 1820, it became unmistakable that he had consumption. During the spring he saw the 1820 volume of his poems through the press, but from that time forward he was, and felt himself to be, a doomed man. His condition continually grew worse, and at the end of the summer he was warned that it would be fatal to him to spend another winter in England. He sailed for Naples in September, stayed there until November, and then went to Rome. He was, however, too ill for the Italian climate materially to help him, and he died on 23 February, 1821. He was buried in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, where Shelley's ashes were brought in the following year.

It has been remarked that, while Shelley wrote nearly all his greatest poetry in the period between his twenty-sixth year and the time of his death, Keats died at twenty-five, nor had he been a precocious youth. And yet, while Coleridge and Shelley were also pioneers in the nineteenth-century development of poetry, Professor H. J. C. Grierson has said that "Keats has been, with-

out any exception, the greatest influence in English poetry for a whole century. To his example and inspiration are due all the wonderful sensuous felicity, the splendor of exotic phrasing and harmony of Tennyson's 1842 volumes; the bold and varied experiments of Browning's *Bells and Pomegranates*; the curious subtleties of *The Blessed Damozel* and *The House of Life*; *The Defense of Guinevere* and *The Earthly Paradise*; *Poems and Ballads* and *Atalanta in Calydon*. If poetry be first and last a sensuous pleasure, then Keats and his successors are the greatest of our poets since Spenser, and the Marlowe of *Hero and Leander*, the Shakespeare of *Venus and Adonis* and the 'sugared sonnets'; as virtuosi of phrase and harmonies perhaps greater even than these" (Warton Lect. XI, Brit. Acad.). Of course poetry is not first and last a sensuous pleasure, but it is a part of Keats's greatness that, although he began his work wishing only to mirror in poetry the fine flower of exquisite sensation, he rapidly outgrew his starting-point and was unmistakably approaching a rich maturity when death cut him down. He "is a great poet, first of all because he had the supreme sensitiveness of a poet's imagination, and caught up the beauty about him as a lake takes color and shadow from the sky, partly because he was a born artist and studied with constant devotion the technique of his art, but also because he had a mind and spirit bent on applying to his art the searching test of hard thought and vital experience. We only read Keats aright when we learn from his own lips that he wrote, not for art's sake only, but for the sake of truth and for the sake of life" (E. de Sélincourt, Warton Lect. XII, Brit. Acad.).

### SONNET<sup>1</sup>

KEEN, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there

Among the bushes, half leafless and dry;  
The stars look very cold about the sky,  
And I have many miles on foot to fare;  
Yet feel I little of the cold bleak air, 5  
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,  
Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,

Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair:  
For I am brimful of the friendliness

That in a little cottage I have found; 10  
Of fair-haired Milton's eloquent distress,  
And all his love for gentle Lycid<sup>2</sup> drowned;  
Of lovely Laura<sup>3</sup> in her light green dress,  
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crowned.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1816 after a visit to Leigh Hunt's cottage at Hampstead; published in 1817.

<sup>2</sup>Lycidas.

<sup>3</sup>The lady whose name Petrarch immortalized in the sonnets which record his love for her.

### ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER<sup>4</sup>

MUCH have I traveled in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told, 5  
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman<sup>5</sup> speak out loud and bold:  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken; 10  
Or like stout Cortez<sup>6</sup> when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

<sup>4</sup>Written in 1815, published in 1817.

<sup>5</sup>George Chapman (1559?-1634) published his translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* 1598-1616.

<sup>6</sup>Either a conscious alteration or a slip, as it was really Balboa who discovered the Pacific.

ENDYMION<sup>1</sup>

## BOOK I

## HYMN TO PAN

O THOU, whose mighty palace roof doth hang  
 From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
 Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death  
 Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;  
 Who lov'st to see the hamadryads<sup>2</sup> dress      5  
 Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels  
 darken;  
 And through whole solemn hours dost sit,  
 and hearken  
 The dreary melody of bedded reeds—  
 In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds  
 The pipy hemlock<sup>3</sup> to strange overgrowth, 10  
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loath  
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx<sup>4</sup>—do thou now,  
 By thy love's milky brow!  
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,  
 Hear us, great Pan!      15

O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet,  
 turtles<sup>5</sup>  
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,  
 What time thou wanderest at eventide  
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the  
 side      19  
 Of thine enmosséd realms: O thou, to whom  
 Broad-leaved fig-trees even now foredoom  
 Their ripened fruitage; yellow-girted bees  
 Their golden honeycombs; our village leas  
 Their fairest-blossomed beans and popped  
 corn;  
 The chuckling linnet its five young unborn, 25  
 To sing for thee; low-creeping strawberries  
 Their summer coolness; pent-up butterflies<sup>6</sup>  
 Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh-budding  
 year  
 All its completions—be quickly near,      29  
 By every wind that nods the mountain pine,  
 O forester divine!

Thou, to whom every faun and satyr flies  
 For willing service; whether to surprise  
 The squatted hare while in half-sleeping fit;  
 Or upward ragged precipices flit      35  
 To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw;  
 Or by mysterious enticement draw

Bewildered shepherds to their path again;  
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy main,<sup>7</sup>  
 And gather up all fancifulest shells      40  
 For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,<sup>8</sup>  
 And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping;  
 Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,  
 The while they pelt each other on the crown  
 With silvery oak-apples, and fir-cones brown—  
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,      46  
 Hear us, O satyr king!

O Harkener to the loud-clapping shears,  
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
 A ram goes bleating: Winder of the horn, 50  
 When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn  
 Anger our huntsmen: Breather round our  
 farms,  
 To keep off mildews, and all weather harms:  
 Strange ministrant of undescribéd sounds,  
 That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,  
 And wither dearly on barren moors:      56  
 Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
 Leading to universal knowledge—see,  
 Great son of Dryope,  
 The many that are come to pay their vows 60  
 With leaves about their brows!

Be still the unimaginable lodge  
 For solitary thinkings; such as dodge  
 Conception to the very bourn<sup>9</sup> of heaven,  
 Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven  
 That, spreading in this dull and clodded  
 earth,      66  
 Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth:  
 Be still a symbol of immensity;  
 A firmament reflected in a sea;  
 An element filling the space between;      70  
 An unknown—but no more: we humbly screen  
 With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bend-  
 ing,  
 And giving out a shout most heaven-rending,  
 Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,<sup>10</sup>  
 Upon thy Mount Lycean!<sup>11</sup>      75

## BOOK IV

SONG OF THE INDIAN MAID<sup>12</sup>

O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The natural hue of health, from vermeil<sup>13</sup>  
 lips?—

<sup>1</sup>Sea.<sup>2</sup>The dwelling-places of nymphs of fresh-water streams.<sup>3</sup>Boundary.<sup>4</sup>Hymn of praise.<sup>5</sup>Pan was born on Lycæus, a mountain in Arcadia.<sup>6</sup>This song, or hymn, forms ll. 146–290 of Bk. IV. It was written in the autumn of 1817. Endymion, while searching vainly for Cynthia, whom he loves, finds in the forest an Indian maiden who is bewailing the loss of her lover and the emptiness of her soul without love.<sup>7</sup>Vermilion.<sup>1</sup>Published in 1818. The *Hymn to Pan* forms ll. 232–306 of Bk. I and was written in the early summer of 1817. It is sung by those at the festival of Latmian shepherds with which *Endymion* opens.<sup>2</sup>Tree-nymphs.<sup>3</sup>A poisonous European plant with a hollow stem, like a pipe.<sup>4</sup>A nymph who fled from Pan and, when she sought refuge in a river, was changed into a reed.<sup>5</sup>Turtle-doves.<sup>6</sup>Chrysalises.



To give maiden blushes  
 To the white rose bushes? 5  
 Or is 't thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—  
 To give the glow-worm light? 10  
 Or, on a moonless night,  
 To tinge, on siren shores, the salt sea-spray?<sup>1</sup>

O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?—  
 To give at evening pale 16  
 Unto the nightingale,  
 That thou mayst listen the cold dewes among?

O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow 20  
 Heart's lightness from the merriment of  
 May?—  
 A lover would not tread  
 A cowslip on the head,  
 Though he should dance from eve till peep of  
 day—  
 Nor any drooping flower 25  
 Held sacred for thy bower,  
 Wherever he may sport himself and play.

To Sorrow  
 I bade good morrow,  
 And thought to leave her far away behind; 30  
 But cheerly, cheerly,  
 She loves me dearly;  
 She is so constant to me, and so kind:  
 I would deceive her  
 And so leave her, 35  
 But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,  
 I sat a-weeping: in the whole world wide  
 There was no one to ask me why I wept—  
 And so I kept 40  
 Brimming the water-lily cups with tears  
 Cold as my fears.

Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,  
 I sat a-weeping: what enamored bride,  
 Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,  
 But hides and shrouds 46  
 Beneath dark palm-trees by a river side?

And as I sat, over the light blue hills  
 There came a noise of revelers: the rills  
 Into the wide stream came of purple hue— 50  
 'Twas Bacchus and his crew!<sup>2</sup>

The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills  
 From kissing cymbals made a merry din—  
 'Twas Bacchus and his kin!

Like to a moving vintage down they came, 55  
 Crowned with green leaves, and faces all on  
 flame;  
 All madly dancing through the pleasant val-  
 ley,

To scare thee, Melancholy!  
 O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!  
 And I forgot thee, as the berried holly 60  
 By shepherds is forgotten, when, in June,  
 Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and moon:—  
 I rushed into the folly!

Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,  
 Trifling his ivy-dart,<sup>3</sup> in dancing mood, 65  
 With sidelong laughing;  
 And little rills of crimson wine imbrued  
 His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough  
 white

For Venus' pearly bite;  
 And near him rode Silenus<sup>4</sup> on his ass, 70  
 Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
 Tipsily quaffing.

Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence  
 came ye,  
 So many, and so many, and such glee?  
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate, 75  
 Your lutes, and gentler fate?  
 "We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,  
 A-conquering!

Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,  
 We dance before him thorough kingdoms  
 wide:— 80

Come hither, lady fair, and joinéd be  
 To our wild minstrelsy!"

Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came  
 ye,

So many, and so many, and such glee?  
 Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left  
 Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?— 86

"For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;  
 For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,  
 And cold mushrooms;

For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;  
 Great god of breathless cups and chirping  
 mirth!— 91

Come hither, lady fair, and joinéd be  
 To our mad minstrelsy!"

Over wide streams and mountains great we  
 went,

And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent, 95  
 Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,  
 With Asian elephants:

<sup>1</sup>Sea-spray.

<sup>2</sup>The following description of the progress of Bacchus is inspired by Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne*, a picture which is now in the National Gallery, London.

<sup>3</sup>Playing with his thyrsus, or wand, which he always carried.

<sup>4</sup>The foster-father of Bacchus.

Onward these myriads—with song and dance,  
With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians'  
prance,

Web-footed alligators, crocodiles, 100  
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,  
Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil  
Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers' toil:  
With toying oars and silken sails they glide,  
Nor care for wind and tide. 105

Mounted on panthers' furs and lions' manes,  
From rear to van they scour about the plains;  
A three days' journey in a moment done:  
And always, at the rising of the sun,  
About the wilds they hunt with spear and  
horn, 110  
On spleenful unicorn.

I saw Osirian<sup>1</sup> Egypt kneel adown  
Before the vine-wreath crown!  
I saw parched Abyssinia rouse and sing  
To the silver cymbals' ring! 115  
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
Old Tartary the fierce!

The kings of Ind their jewel-scepters vail,<sup>2</sup>  
And from their treasures scatter pearléd hail;  
Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,  
And all his priesthood moans, 121  
Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning  
pale.—

Into these regions came I, following him,  
Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim  
To stray away into these forests drear, 125  
Alone, without a peer:  
And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

Young stranger!  
I've been a ranger  
In search of pleasure throughout every clime;  
Alas, 'tis not for me! 131  
Bewitched I sure must be,  
To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

Come then, Sorrow,  
Sweetest Sorrow! 135  
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:  
I thought to leave thee,  
And deceive thee,  
But now of all the world I love thee best.

There is not one, 140  
No, no, not one  
But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;  
Thou art her mother,  
And her brother,  
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.

<sup>1</sup>According to Keats's authority (Lemprière) Osiris, a god worshipped by the Egyptians, corresponded to the Greek god Bacchus.

<sup>2</sup>Bend down.

✓ SONNET<sup>3</sup>

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming  
brain,  
Before high-piled books, in charact'ry,<sup>4</sup>  
Hold like rich garnerers the full-ripened  
grain;  
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,<sup>4</sup>  
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And think that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of  
chance;  
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,  
That I shall never look upon thee more, 10  
Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love;—then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think,  
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

FRAGMENT OF AN ODE  
TO MAIA, WRITTEN ON  
MAY DAY, 1818<sup>5</sup>

MOTHER of Hermes! and still youthful Maia!  
May I sing to thee  
As thou wast hymned on the shores of Baiae?<sup>6</sup>  
Or may I woo thee  
In earlier Sicilian? or thy smiles 5  
Seek as they once were sought, in Grecian isles,  
By bards who died content on pleasant sward,  
Leaving great verse unto a little clan?  
O, give me their old vigor, and unheard  
Save of the quiet primrose, and the span 10  
Of heaven and few ears,  
Rounded by thee, my song should die away  
Content as theirs,  
Rich in the simple worship of a day.

✓ STANZAS<sup>7</sup>

IN A drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy tree,  
Thy branches ne'er remember  
Their green felicity:  
The north cannot undo them, 5  
With a sleety whistle through them;  
Nor frozen thawings glue them  
From budding at the prime.

<sup>3</sup>Written before 31 January, 1818; published in 1848.

<sup>4</sup>Writing.

<sup>5</sup>Published in 1848. Maia was the eldest and most beautiful of the seven sisters known as the Pleiads, and was a goddess of the spring.

<sup>6</sup>Baiae, near Naples, was famous for its situation and baths, and many wealthy Romans had country houses there. Keats thinks of the cult of Maia as extending from Roman times back to the days when Greek colonies were planted in Sicily and further back to earlier days in the Greek islands.

<sup>7</sup>Written in 1817 or 1818, published in 1829.

In a drear-nighted December,  
 Too happy, happy brook,  
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember  
 Apollo's summer look;  
 But with a sweet forgetting,  
 They stay their crystal fretting,  
 Never, never petting  
 About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many  
 A gentle girl and boy!  
 But were there ever any  
 Writhed not at passéd joy?  
 To know the change and feel it,  
 When there is none to heal it,  
 Nor numbéd sense to steel it,  
 Was never said in rime.

### FANCY<sup>1</sup>

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
 Pleasure never is at home:  
 At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
 Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;  
 Then let wingéd Fancy wander  
 Through the thought still spread beyond her:  
 Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
 She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.  
 O sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
 Summer's joys are spoilt by use,  
 And the enjoying of the Spring  
 Fades as does its blossoming:  
 Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,  
 Blushing through the mist and dew,  
 Cloys with tasting: What do then?  
 Sit thee by the ingle, when  
 The sear faggot blazes bright,  
 Spirit of a winter's night;  
 When the soundless earth is muffled,  
 And the cakéd snow is shuffled  
 From the plowboy's heavy shoon;  
 When the Night doth meet the Noon  
 In a dark conspiracy  
 To banish Even from her sky.  
 Sit thee there, and send abroad,  
 With a mind self-overawed,  
 Fancy, high-commissioned:—send her!  
 She has vassals to attend her:  
 She will bring, in spite of frost,  
 Beauties that the earth hath lost;  
 She will bring thee, all together,  
 All delights of summer weather;  
 All the buds and bells of May,  
 From dewy sward or thorny spray;  
 All the heapéd Autumn's wealth,  
 With a still, mysterious stealth:  
 She will mix these pleasures up  
 Like three fit wines in a cup,

And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt hear  
 Distant harvest-carols clear;  
 Rustle of the reaped corn;  
 Sweet birds antheming the morn:  
 And, in the same moment—hark!  
 'Tis the early April lark,  
 Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
 Foraging for sticks and straw.  
 Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
 The daisy and the marigold;  
 White-plumed lilies, and the first  
 Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;  
 Shaded hyacinth, alway  
 Sapphire queen of the mid-May;  
 And every leaf, and every flower  
 Pearléd with the self-same shower.  
 Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
 Meager from its celléd sleep;  
 And the snake all winter-thin  
 Cast on sunny bank its skin;  
 Freckled nest eggs thou shalt see  
 Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,  
 When the hen-bird's wing doth rest  
 Quiet on her mossy nest;  
 Then the hurry and alarm  
 When the bee-hive casts its swarm;  
 Acorns ripe down-pattering,  
 While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
 Everything is spoilt by use:  
 Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
 Too much gazed at? Where's the maid  
 Whose lip mature is ever new?  
 Where's the eye, however blue,  
 Doth not weary? Where's the face  
 One would meet in every place?  
 Where's the voice, however soft,  
 One would hear so very oft?  
 At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
 Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.  
 Let, then, wingéd Fancy find  
 Thee a mistress to thy mind:  
 Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,<sup>2</sup>  
 Ere the God of Torment taught her  
 How to frown and how to chide;  
 With a waist and with a side  
 White as Hebe's,<sup>3</sup> when her zone  
 Slipped its golden clasp, and down  
 Fell her kirtle to her feet,  
 While she held the goblet sweet,  
 And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh  
 Of the Fancy's silken leash;  
 Quickly break her prison-string,  
 And such joys as these she'll bring.  
 Let the wingéd Fancy roam,  
 Pleasure never is at home.

<sup>2</sup>Proserpine, who became the queen of Pluto, king of the underworld of shades.

<sup>3</sup>Jove's cup-bearer.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1818, published in 1820.



ODE<sup>1</sup>

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
 Ye have left your souls on earth!  
 Have ye souls in heaven too,  
 Double-lived in regions new?  
 Yes, and those of heaven commune 5  
 With the spheres of sun and moon;  
 With the noise of fountains wondrous,  
 And the parle<sup>2</sup> of voices thund'rous;  
 With the whisper of heaven's trees  
 And one another, in soft ease 10  
 Seated on Elysian lawns  
 Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;  
 Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
 Where the daisies are rose-scented,  
 And the rose herself has got 15  
 Perfume which on earth is not;  
 Where the nightingale doth sing  
 Not a senseless, trancéd thing,  
 But divine, melodious truth;  
 Philosophic numbers smooth; 20  
 Tales and golden histories  
 Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then  
 On the earth ye live again;  
 And the souls ye left behind you 25  
 Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
 Where your other souls are joying  
 Never slumbered, never cloying.  
 Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
 To mortals, of their little week; 30  
 Of their sorrows and delights;  
 Of their passions and their spites;  
 Of their glory and their shame;  
 What doth strengthen and what maim.  
 Thus ye teach us, every day, 35  
 Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
 Ye have left your souls on earth!  
 Ye have souls in heaven too,  
 Double-lived in regions new! 40

 LINES ON THE MERMAID  
 TAVERN<sup>3</sup>

SOULS of poets dead and gone,  
 What Elysium have ye known,  
 Happy field or mossy cavern,

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1818, published in 1820. Keats wrote this in his copy of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, on the blank page preceding the tragi-comedy entitled *The Fair Maid of the Inn*. The poem was, therefore, if not addressed to Beaumont and Fletcher, at least inspired by thought of their work.

<sup>2</sup>Speech.

<sup>3</sup>Written in 1818, published in 1820. The Mermaid Tavern, in Bread Street, Cheapside, was the favorite meeting-place of the chief men of letters of the day at the close of the sixteenth century and in the early seventeenth.

Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
 Have ye tippled drink more fine 5  
 Than mine host's Canary wine?  
 Or are fruits of Paradise  
 Sweeter than those dainty pies  
 Of venison? O generous food!  
 Dressed as though bold Robin Hood 10  
 Would, with his maid Marian,  
 Sup and bowse<sup>4</sup> from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
 Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
 Nobody knew whither, till 15  
 An Astrologer's old quill  
 To a sheepskin gave the story,—  
 Said he saw you in your glory,  
 Underneath a new old-sign  
 Sipping beverage divine, 20  
 And pledging with contented smack  
 The Mermaid in the Zodiac.<sup>5</sup>

Souls of poets dead and gone,  
 What Elysium have ye known,  
 Happy field or mossy cavern, 25  
 Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

ROBIN HOOD<sup>6</sup>

## TO A FRIEND

No! THOSE days are gone away,  
 And their hours are old and gray,  
 And their minutes buried all  
 Under the down-trodden pall  
 Of the leaves of many years: 5  
 Many times have Winter's shears,  
 Frozen North, and chilling East,  
 Sounded tempests to the feast  
 Of the forest's whispering fleeces,<sup>7</sup>  
 Since men knew nor rent nor leases. 10

No, the bugle sounds no more,  
 And the twanging bow no more;  
 Silent is the ivory<sup>8</sup> shrill  
 Past the heath and up the hill;  
 There is no mid-forest laugh, 15  
 Where lone Echo gives the half  
 To some wight, amazed to hear  
 Jestings, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June  
 You may go, with sun or moon, 20  
 Or the seven stars to light you,  
 Or the polar ray to right you,<sup>9</sup>  
 But you never may behold  
 Little John, or Robin bold:

<sup>4</sup>Drink.

<sup>5</sup>*I. e.*, in the heavens.

<sup>6</sup>Written early in 1818, published in 1820. The friend was John Hamilton Reynolds.

<sup>7</sup>Leaves.

<sup>8</sup>Whistle.

<sup>9</sup>Or with Charles's Wain (the Dipper), or the North Star.

Never one, of all the clan, 25  
 Thrumming on an empty can  
 Some old hunting ditty, while  
 He doth his green way beguile  
 To fair hostess Merriment,  
 Down beside the pasture Trent,<sup>1</sup> 30  
 For he left the merry tale,  
 Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris<sup>2</sup> din;  
 Gone, the song of Gamelyn;<sup>3</sup>  
 Gone, the tough-belted outlaw 35  
 Idling in the "grenè shawe";<sup>4</sup>  
 All are gone away and past!  
 And if Robin should be cast  
 Sudden from his turfè grave,  
 And if Marian should have 40  
 Once again her forest days,  
 She would weep, and he would craze;  
 He would swear, for all his oaks,  
 Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,  
 Have rotted on the briny seas; 45  
 She would weep that her wild bees  
 Sang not to her—strange! that horey  
 Can't be got without hard money!

So it is; yet let us sing  
 Honor to the old bow-string! 50  
 Honor to the bugle-horn!  
 Honor to the woods unshorn!  
 Honor to the Lincoln green!<sup>5</sup>  
 Honor to the archer keen!  
 Honor to tight little John, 55  
 And the horse he rode upon!  
 Honor to bold Robin Hood,  
 Sleeping in the underwood!  
 Honor to Maid Marian,  
 And to all the Sherwood clan! 60  
 Though their days have hurried by  
 Let us two a burden try.

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES<sup>6</sup>

ST. AGNES' EVE—ah, bitter chill it was!  
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;

<sup>1</sup>The fields about the River Trent, which runs by Sherwood Forest.

<sup>2</sup>An outdoor dance in costume generally danced by five men and a boy who impersonated Maid Marian.

<sup>3</sup>Name of the hero of a tale of outlawry formerly attributed to Chaucer.

<sup>4</sup>Green wood. <sup>5</sup>Green cloth dyed at Lincoln.

<sup>6</sup>Written early in 1819, published in 1820. The Eve of St. Agnes is 20 January. Probably the subject was suggested to Keats by a passage in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (pt. III, sec. ii, mem. 3, subs. i): "'Tis their only desire, if it may be done by art, to see their husband's picture in a glass; they'll give anything to know when they shall be married, how many husbands they shall have, by *Crommyomantia*, a kind of divination with onions laid on the altar on Christmas Eve, or by fasting on St. Agnes' Eve or Night, to know who shall be their first husband."

The hare limped trembling through the  
 frozen grass,  
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold;  
 Numb were the Beadsman's fingers while  
 he told 5  
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
 Like pious incense from a censer old,  
 Seemed taking flight for heaven without  
 a death,  
 Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his  
 prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;  
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his  
 knees, 11  
 And back returneth, meager, barefoot, wan,  
 Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:  
 The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to  
 freeze,  
 Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails: 15  
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,<sup>7</sup>  
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails  
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and  
 mails.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
 And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden  
 tongue 20  
 Flattered to tears this agéd man and poor.  
 But no—already had his death-bell rung;  
 The joys of all his life were said and sung;  
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:  
 Another way he went, and soon among 25  
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
 And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake  
 to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude  
 soft;  
 And so it chanced, for many a door was  
 wide,  
 From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft, 30  
 The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:  
 The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
 Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:  
 The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
 Stared, where upon their heads the cornice  
 rests, 35  
 With hair blown back, and wings put cross  
 wise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
 Numerous as shadows haunting fairily  
 The brain, new-stuffed, in youth, with  
 triumphs gay 40  
 Of old romance. These let us wish away.

<sup>7</sup>Oratories, small chapels for prayer. The adjective is transferred from the statues to the place.

And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady  
there,  
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry  
day,  
On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,  
As she had heard old dames full many times  
declare. 45

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
And soft adorings from their loves receive  
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,  
If ceremonies due they did aright; 50  
As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;  
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they  
desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Made-  
line: 55  
The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,  
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping  
train  
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain  
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier, 60  
And back retired; not cooled by high dis-  
dain,  
But she saw not: her heart was elsewhere;  
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest  
of the year.

She danced along with vague, regardless  
eyes,  
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and  
short: 65  
The hallowed hour was near at hand: she  
sighs  
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort  
Of whisperers in anger or in sport;  
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and  
scorn,  
Hoodwinked with fairy fancy; all amot,<sup>1</sup> 70  
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,<sup>2</sup>  
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
She lingered still. Meantime, across the  
moors,  
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on  
fire 75  
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and  
implores  
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,

<sup>1</sup>Deadened.

<sup>2</sup>St. Agnes was always pictured with lambs. On the anniversary of her martyrdom two lambs are blessed, then shorn, and the wool is spun and woven by nuns.

But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;  
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth  
such things have been. 81

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell;  
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous cita-  
del:  
For him, those chambers held barbarian  
hordes, 85  
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
Against his lineage; not one breast affords  
Him any mercy in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in  
soul. 90

Ah, happy chance! the agéd creature came  
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's  
flame,  
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond 94  
The sound of merriment and chorus bland.  
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,  
And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,  
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from  
this place;  
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-  
thirsty race!

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish  
Hildebrand; 100  
He had a fever late, and in the fit  
He curséd thee and thine, both house and  
land:  
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a  
whit  
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me!  
flit!  
Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip  
dear, 105  
We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair  
sit,  
And tell me how"—"Good saints! not here,  
not here;  
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be  
thy bier." 108

He followed through a lowly archéd way,  
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,  
And as she muttered "Well-a—well-a-day!"  
He found him in a little moonlight room,  
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,  
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom 115  
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,  
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving pi-  
ously."



"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—  
 Yet men will murder upon holy days:  
 Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,<sup>1</sup>  
 And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays  
 To venture so: it fills me with amaze 122  
 To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes' Eve!  
 God's help! my lady fair the conjurer plays  
 This very night: good angels her deceive!  
 But let me laugh awhile,—I've mickle<sup>2</sup> time to  
 grieve." 126

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,  
 While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
 Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
 Who keepeth closed a wondrous riddle-  
 book, 130  
 As spectacted she sits in chimney nook.  
 But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she  
 told  
 His lady's purpose; and he scarce could  
 brook  
 Tears, at the thought of those enchant-  
 ments cold,  
 And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old. 135

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown  
 rose,  
 Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart  
 Made purple riot: then doth he propose  
 A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:  
 "A cruel man and impious thou art: 140  
 Sweet lady! let her pray, and sleep, and  
 dream  
 Alone with her good angels, far apart  
 From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I  
 deem  
 Thou canst not surely be the same that thou  
 didst seem."

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"  
 Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find  
 grace 146  
 When my weak voice shall whisper its last  
 prayer,  
 If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
 Or look with ruffian passion in her face.  
 Good Angela, believe me, by these tears, 150  
 Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
 Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,  
 And beard them, though they be more fanged  
 than wolves and bears."

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?  
 A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard  
 thing, 155  
 Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight  
 toll;  
 Whose prayers for thee, each morn and  
 evening,

Were never missed." Thus plaining, doth  
 she bring  
 A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;  
 So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing, 160  
 That Angela gives promise she will do  
 Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or  
 woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,  
 Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide  
 Him in a closet, of such privacy 165  
 That he might see her beauty unespied,  
 And win perhaps that night a peerless  
 bride,  
 While legioned fairies paced the coverlet,  
 And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.  
 Never on such a night have lovers met, 170  
 Since Merlin paid his Demon all the mon-  
 strous debt.<sup>3</sup>

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the  
 Dame:  
 "All cates<sup>4</sup> and dainties shall be stored  
 there  
 Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour-  
 frame<sup>5</sup>  
 Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to  
 spare, 175  
 For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare  
 On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
 Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel  
 in prayer  
 The while. Ah! thou must needs the lady  
 wed,  
 Or may I never leave my grave among the  
 dead." 180

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.  
 The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;  
 The dame returned, and whispered in his ear  
 To follow her; with aged eyes aghast  
 From fright of dim espial. Safe at last, 185  
 Through many a dusky gallery, they gain  
 The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed, and  
 chaste;  
 Where Porphyro took covert, pleased  
 amain.  
 His poor guide hurried back with agues in  
 her brain.

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade, 190  
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
 When Madeline, St. Agnes' charméd-maid,  
 Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:

<sup>3</sup>According to one legend Merlin's father was a demon, so that his "debt" to the demon was his existence. He paid this when Vivien destroyed him by means of a spell which he himself had taught her.

<sup>4</sup>Provisions.

<sup>5</sup>Double hoops for holding embroidery.

<sup>1</sup>Supposed to be a sign of supernatural power.

<sup>2</sup>Much.

With silver taper's light, and pious care, <sup>194</sup>  
 She turned, and down the agéd gossip led  
 To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;  
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove  
 frayed<sup>1</sup> and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in; <sup>199</sup>  
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:  
 She closed the door, she panted, all akin  
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:  
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!  
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side; <sup>205</sup>  
 As though a tongueless nightingale should  
 swell  
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in  
 her dell.

A casement high and triple-arched there  
 was,  
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries,  
 Of fruits and flowers, and bunches of knot-  
 grass, <sup>210</sup>  
 And diamonded with panes of quaint de-  
 vice,  
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked  
 wings;  
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand herald-  
 ries,  
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazon-  
 ings, <sup>215</sup>  
 A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of  
 queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry  
 moon,  
 And threw warm gules<sup>2</sup> on Madeline's fair  
 breast,  
 As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and  
 boon;  
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together  
 pressed, <sup>220</sup>  
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint:  
 She seemed a splendid angel, newly dressed,  
 Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew  
 faint:  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal  
 taint. <sup>225</sup>

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,  
 Of all its wreathéd pearls her hair she frees;  
 Unclasps her warméd jewels one by one;  
 Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees  
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her  
 knees: <sup>230</sup>

Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,  
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,  
 In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm is  
 fled. <sup>234</sup>

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,  
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,  
 Until the popped warmth of sleep op-  
 pressed  
 Her soothéd limbs, and soul fatigued away;  
 Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-  
 day; <sup>239</sup>  
 Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;  
 Clapsed like a missal where swart Paynims  
 pray;<sup>3</sup>  
 Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
 As though a rose should shut, and be a bud  
 again.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,  
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress, <sup>245</sup>  
 And listened to her breathing, if it chanced  
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness;  
 Which when he heard, that minute did he  
 bless,  
 And breathed himself: then from the closet  
 crept,  
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness, <sup>250</sup>  
 And over the hushed carpet, silent, step-  
 ped,  
 And 'tween the curtains peeped, where,  
 lo!—how fast she slept!

Then by the bedside, where the faded moon  
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set <sup>254</sup>  
 A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon  
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—  
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!<sup>4</sup>  
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarinet,  
 Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—  
 The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise  
 is gone. <sup>261</sup>

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
 In blanchéd linen, smooth, and lavendered,  
 While he from forth the closet brought a  
 heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and  
 gourd; <sup>265</sup>  
 With jellies soother<sup>5</sup> than the creamy curd,  
 And lucent syrups, tinct<sup>6</sup> with cinnamon;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy<sup>7</sup> transferred  
 From Fez; and spicéd dainties, every one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

<sup>3</sup>As tightly closed as a Christian prayer-book in a pagan  
 land. (Keats originally wrote, "Shut like a missal," etc.)

<sup>4</sup>Charm. Morpheus was the god of sleep.

<sup>5</sup>Softer.

<sup>6</sup>Flavored.

<sup>7</sup>Merchant-ship.

<sup>1</sup>Frightened.

<sup>2</sup>Blood-red (heraldic term).

These delicacies he heaped with glowing  
hand 271

On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
Of wreathéd silver: sumptuous they stand  
In the retiréd quiet of the night,  
Filling the chilly room with perfume  
light.— 275

"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!  
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:<sup>1</sup>  
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,  
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth  
ache." 279

Thus whispering, his warm, unnervéd arm  
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream  
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight  
charm

Impossible to melt as icéd stream:

The lustrous salvers in the moonlight  
gleam; 284

Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:  
It seemed he never, never could redeem  
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;  
So mused awhile, entoid in wooféd phantasies.<sup>2</sup>

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—  
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tender-  
est be, 290

He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,  
In Provence called "La belle dame sans  
mercy."<sup>3</sup>

Close to her ear touching the melody;—  
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft  
moan:

He ceased—she panted quick—and sud-  
denly 295

Her blue affrayéd eyes wide open shone:  
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-  
sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:  
There was a painful change, that nigh ex-  
pelled 300

The blisses of her dream so pure and deep,  
At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
And moan forth witless words with many  
a sigh,

While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;  
Who knelt, with joinéd hands and piteous  
eye, 305

Fearing to move or speak, she looked so  
dreamingly.

<sup>1</sup>Literally, hermit—i. e., here, consecrated servant.

<sup>2</sup>Fancies mingled together as are woven threads.

<sup>3</sup>The Beautiful Lady without Mercy. The poem is not of Provençal origin, but is by Alain Chartier, court poet of Charles II of France. An English translation of it was attributed to Chaucer, and thus Keats happened to see the title.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now  
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
Made tunable with every sweetest vow;  
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:  
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill,  
and drear! 311

Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
Those looks immortal, those complainings  
dear!

Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where  
to go." 315

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far  
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star  
Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep re-  
pose;

Into her dream he melted, as the rose 320  
Blendeth its odor with the violet,—

Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind  
blows

Like Love's alarum, pattering the sharp  
sleet

Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon  
hath set.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown  
sleet: 325

"This is no dream, my bride, my Made-  
line!"

'Tis dark: the icéd gusts still rave and beat:  
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!

Porphyro will leave me here to fade and  
pine.

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither  
bring? 330

I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—  
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned  
wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely  
bride!

Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest? 335  
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and ver-  
meil-dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
After so many hours of toil and quest,  
A famished pilgrim,—saved by miracle.  
Though I have found, I will not rob thy  
nest, 340

Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st  
well

To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from fairy land,  
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:  
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—345  
The bloated wassailers will never heed;—



Let us away, my love, with happy speed;  
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—  
Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy  
mead.

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be, 350  
For o'er the southern moors I have a home  
for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready  
spears—

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they  
found; 355

In all the house was heard no human sound.  
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by  
each door;

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and  
hound,

Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;  
And the long carpets rose along the gusty  
floor. 360

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide  
hall;

Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide;  
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flagon by his side:

The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook  
his hide, 365

But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:

By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—  
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;

The key turns, and the door upon its hinges  
groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago 370  
These lovers fled away into the storm.

That night the Baron dreamed of many a  
woe,

And all his warrior-guests, with shade and  
form

Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-  
worm,

Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old  
Died palsy-twitched, with meager face de-  
form; 376

The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes  
cold.

### TO SLEEP<sup>1</sup>

O SOFT embalmer of the still midnight!  
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,  
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the  
light,

Enshaded in forgetfulness divine;

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1819, published in 1848 (an early draft was published in America, in the *Dial*, in 1843).

O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close, 5  
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,  
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities;  
Then save me, or the passéd day will shine  
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes; 10  
Save me from curious conscience, that still  
lords

Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a  
mole;

Turn the key deftly in the oiléd wards,  
And seal the hushéd casket of my soul.

### LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI<sup>2</sup>

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering?

\*The sedge has withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, 5  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever dew, 10  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery's child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light, 15  
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;<sup>3</sup>  
She looked at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan. 20

I set her on my pacing steed  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet, 25  
And honey wild, and manna dew,  
And sure in language strange she said—  
"I love thee true!"

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept and sighed full sore, 30  
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes  
With kisses four.

<sup>2</sup>Written in the spring of 1819, published (by Leigh Hunt in the *Indicator*) in 1820. Two versions of the poem exist, the earlier of which is here printed. Keats owes the title—but nothing more than the title—to a poem by Alain Chartier.

<sup>3</sup>Girdle.

And there she lulléd me asleep,  
 And there I dreamed—ah, woe betide!  
 The latest dream I ever dreamed 35  
 On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,  
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;  
 They cried—"La Belle Dame sans Merci  
 Thee hath in thrall!" 40

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,  
 With horrid warning gapéd wide,  
 And I awoke and found me here,  
 On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here, 45  
 Alone and palely loitering,  
 Though the sedge is withered from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

## TWO SONNETS ON FAME<sup>1</sup>

### I

FAME, like a wayward girl, will still be coy  
 To those who woo her with too slavish  
 knees,  
 But makes surrender to some thoughtless boy,  
 And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;  
 She is a Gypsy will not speak to those 5  
 Who have not learned to be content with-  
 out her;  
 A Jilt, whose ear was never whispered close,  
 Who thinks they scandal her who talk  
 about her;  
 A very Gypsy is she, Nilus-born,<sup>2</sup>  
 Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar; 10  
 Ye love-sick Bards! repay her scorn for scorn;  
 Ye Artists lovelorn! madmen that ye are!  
 Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,  
 Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

### II

"You cannot eat your cake and have it too."—  
*Proverb.*

How fevered is the man, who cannot look  
 Upon his mortal days with temperate  
 blood,  
 Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,  
 And robs his fair name of its maidenhood;  
 It is as if the rose should pluck herself, 5  
 Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,  
 As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,  
 Should darken her pure grot with muddy  
 gloom;  
 But the rose leaves herself upon the brier, .

For winds to kiss and grateful bees to  
 feed, 10  
 And the ripe plum still wears its dim attire;  
 The undisturbed lake has crystal space;  
 Why then should man, teasing the world  
 for grace,  
 Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE<sup>3</sup>

MY HEART aches, and a drowsy numbness  
 pains  
 My sense, as though of hemlock<sup>4</sup> I had  
 drunk,  
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had  
 sunk:  
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5  
 But being too happy in thine happiness,—  
 That thou, light-wingéd Dryad<sup>5</sup> of the  
 trees,  
 In some melodious plot  
 Of beechen green, and shadows number-  
 less, 9  
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been  
 Cooled a long age in the deep-delvéd earth,  
 Tasting of Flora<sup>6</sup> and the country-green,  
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt  
 mirth!  
 O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15  
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,<sup>7</sup>  
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
 And purple-stainéd mouth;  
 That I might drink, and leave the world  
 unseen,  
 And with thee fade away into the forest  
 dim: 20

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves hast never  
 known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
 Here, where men sit and hear each other  
 groan;  
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray  
 hairs, 25  
 Where youth grows pale, and specter-thin,  
 and dies;  
 Where but to think is to be full of sor-  
 row  
 And leaden-eyed despairs;  
 Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-  
 morrow. 30

<sup>1</sup>Both sonnets were written in 1819 and published in 1848.

<sup>2</sup>Gypsies were formerly supposed to come from Egypt.

<sup>3</sup>Written in May, 1819; published in 1820.

<sup>4</sup>A poison.

<sup>5</sup>Tree-nymph.

<sup>6</sup>Goddess of flowers.

<sup>7</sup>Spring of the Muses on Mount Helicon.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,<sup>1</sup>  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
 Though the dull brain perplexes and re-  
 tards:  
 Already with thee! tender is the night, 35  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her  
 throne,  
 Clustered around by all her starry Fays;  
 But here there is no light,  
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes  
 blown  
 Through verdurous glooms and winding  
 mossy ways. 40

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the  
 boughs,  
 But, in embalméd darkness, guess each sweet  
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree  
 wild; 45  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglan-  
 tine;  
 Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;  
 And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on sum-  
 mer eves. 50

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,  
 Called him soft names in many a muséd  
 rime,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath,—  
 Now more than ever seems it rich to  
 die, 55  
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul  
 abroad  
 In such an ecstasy!  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in  
 vain—  
 To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee down;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a  
 path 65  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth,<sup>2</sup> when,  
 sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the  
 foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self.  
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75  
 Past the near meadows, over the still  
 stream,  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep  
 In the next valley-glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep? 80

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN<sup>3</sup>

THOU still unravished bride of quietness,  
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rime:  
 \*What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy  
 shape 5  
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?<sup>4</sup>  
 What men or gods are these? What  
 maidens loath?  
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ec-  
 stasy? 10

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play  
 on;  
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,  
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not  
 leave 15  
 Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
 Bold Lover, never, never canst thou  
 kiss,  
 Though winning near the goal—yet, do not  
 grieve;  
 She cannot fade, though thou hast not  
 thy bliss,  
 For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! 20

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
 For ever piping songs for ever new;  
 More happy love! more happy, happy love! 25  
 For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,  
 For ever panting and for ever young;  
 All breathing human passion far above,  
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and  
 cloyed,  
 A burning forehead, and a parching  
 tongue. 30

<sup>3</sup>Written in February or March, 1810; published in 1820.<sup>4</sup>Tempe is a valley in Thessaly, Arcadia a mountainous region in the Peloponnese.<sup>1</sup>Leopards.<sup>2</sup>See Ruth, ii.



Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
 To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
 And all her silken flanks with garlands  
 dressed?

What little town by river or sea-shore, 35  
 Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
 Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?  
 And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
 Will silent be; and not a soul to tell 39  
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede<sup>1</sup>  
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;  
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of  
 thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral! 45  
 When old age shall this generation waste,  
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou  
 say'st,

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all  
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to  
 know. 50

### ✓ODE TO PSYCHE<sup>2</sup>

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers,  
 wrung

By sweet enforcement and remembrance  
 dear,

And pardon that thy secrets should be sung  
 Even into thine own soft-conchéd ear:

Surely I dreamed to-day, or did I see 5  
 The wingéd Psyche with awakened eyes?

I wandered in a forest thoughtlessly,  
 And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,  
 Saw two fair creatures, couchéd side by side  
 In deepest grass, beneath the whispering  
 roof 10

Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where  
 there ran

A brooklet, scarce espied:

'Mid hushed, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-  
 eyed,

Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,  
 They lay calm-breathing, on the bedded  
 grass; 15

Their arms embracéd, and their pinions too;

Their lips touchéd not, but had not bade  
 adieu,  
 As if disjointed by soft-handed slumber,  
 And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
 At tender eye-dawn of aurean love: 20  
 The wingéd boy I knew;<sup>3</sup>  
 But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?  
 His Psyche true!

O latest-born and loveliest vision far  
 Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy! 25  
 Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-regioned star,<sup>4</sup>  
 Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky;<sup>5</sup>  
 Fairer than these, though temple thou hast  
 none,

Nor altar heaped with flowers;  
 Nor Virgin-choir to make delicious moan 30  
 Upon the midnight hours;  
 No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet  
 From chain-swung censer teeming;  
 No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat  
 Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming. 35

O brightest! though too late for antique  
 vows,

Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,  
 When holy were the haunted forest boughs,  
 Holy the air, the water, and the fire;

Yet even in these days so far retired 40  
 From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,<sup>6</sup>  
 Fluttering among the faint Olympians,  
 I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.

So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
 Upon the midnight hours; 45  
 Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense  
 sweet

From wingéd censer teeming;  
 Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat  
 Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane 50

In some untrodden region of my mind,  
 Where branched thoughts, new-grown with  
 pleasant pain,

Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:  
 Far, far around shall those dark-clustered  
 trees

Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by  
 steep; 55

And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds,  
 and bees,

The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to  
 sleep;

<sup>3</sup>Cupid. The story of Cupid and Psyche may be read in Walter Pater's translation (in *Marius the Epicurean*) or in Robert Bridges' poem, *Eros and Psyche*.

<sup>4</sup>The moon. Phœbe is Artemis.

<sup>5</sup>The Evening Star, Venus.

<sup>6</sup>Translucent wings.

<sup>1</sup>Embroidery.

<sup>2</sup>Written in the spring of 1819, published in 1820. Keats wrote in a letter, "You must recollect that Psyche was not embodied as a goddess before the time of Apuleius the Platonist, who lived after the Augustan age, and consequently the goddess was never worshiped or sacrificed to with any of the ancient fervor, and perhaps never thought of in the old religion—I am more orthodox than to let a heathen goddess be so neglected."

And in the midst of this wide quietness  
 A rosy sanctuary will I dress  
 With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,  
 With buds, and bells, and stars without a  
 name, 61  
 With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,  
 Who breeding flowers, will never breed the  
 same;  
 And there shall be for thee all soft delight  
 That shadowy thought can win, 65  
 A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,  
 To let the warm Love in!

✓ TO AUTUMN<sup>1</sup>

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-  
 eaves run;  
 To bend with apples the mossed cottage-  
 trees, 5  
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel  
 shells  
 With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
 Until they think warm days will never cease,  
 For Summer has o'er-brimmed their  
 clammy cells. 11

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing  
 wind; 15  
 Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,  
 Drowsed with the fumes of poppies, while  
 thy hock  
 Spares the next swath and all its twined  
 flowers;  
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
 Steady thy laden head across a brook; 20  
 Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
 Thou watchest the last oozings, hours  
 by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where  
 are they?  
 Think not of them, thou hast thy music  
 too,  
 While barréd clouds bloom the soft dying  
 day, 25  
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;  
 Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn  
 Among the river sallows,<sup>2</sup> borne aloft

Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;  
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly  
 bourn; 30  
 Hedge-cricket<sup>3</sup> sing; and now with treble  
 soft  
 The redbreast whistles from a garden-  
 croft;<sup>4</sup>  
 And gathering swallows twitter in the  
 skies.

ODE ON MELANCHOLY<sup>5</sup>

No, NO, go not to Lethe,<sup>6</sup> neither twist  
 Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poison-  
 ous wine;  
 Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed  
 By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;<sup>7</sup>  
 Make not your rosary of yew-berries, 5  
 Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be  
 Your mournful Psyche,<sup>8</sup> nor the downy  
 owl  
 A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;  
 For shade to shade will come too drowsily,  
 And drown the wakeful anguish of the  
 soul. 10

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
 Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,  
 That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
 And hides the green hill in an April shroud;  
 Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose, 15  
 Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,  
 Or on the wealth of globéd peonies;  
 Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
 Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,  
 And feed deep, deep upon her peerless  
 eyes. 20

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must  
 die;  
 And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
 Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
 Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:  
 Ay, in the very temple of Delight 25  
 Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
 Though seen of none save him whose  
 strenuous tongue  
 Can burst Joy's grape against his palate  
 fine:  
 His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,  
 And be among her cloudy trophies  
 hung. 30

<sup>2</sup>Grasshoppers. <sup>4</sup>Garden-enclosure.<sup>5</sup>Written in the spring of 1819, published in 1820.<sup>6</sup>River of forgetfulness, in Hades.<sup>7</sup>Queen of the lower world.<sup>8</sup>The soul. Psyche was sometimes represented as a butter-  
fly. Do not, says Keats, let insects who symbolize death  
represent your mournful soul.<sup>1</sup>Written in September, 1819, published in 1820.<sup>2</sup>Willows.

LAMIA<sup>1</sup>

## PART I

UPON a time, before the faery broods  
Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous  
woods,

Before King Oberon's bright diadem,  
Scepter, and mantle, clasped with dewy gem,  
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns <sup>5</sup>  
From rushes green, and brakes, and cow-  
slipped lawns,

The ever-smitten Hermes empty left  
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous  
theft:

From high Olympus had he stolen light,  
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the  
sight <sup>10</sup>

Of his great summoner, and made retreat  
Into a forest on the shores of Crete:

For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt  
A nymph to whom all hooféd Satyrs knelt;  
At whose white feet the languid Tritons  
poured <sup>15</sup>

Pearls, while on land they withered and  
adored.

Fast by the springs where she to bathe was  
wont,

And in those meads where sometime she  
might haunt,

Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,  
Though Fancy's casket were unlocked to  
choose. <sup>20</sup>

Ah, what a world of love was at her feet!  
So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat  
Burned from his wingéd heels to either ear,  
That, from a whiteness as the lily clear,  
Blushed into roses 'mid his golden hair, <sup>25</sup>  
Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1819 (finished apparently by 5 September), published in 1820. In a note appended to the poem on its first publication Keats gave his source, as follows: "Philostratus in his fourth book *de Vita Apollonii* [concerning the life of Apollonius], hath a memorable instance in this kind, which I may not omit, of one Menippus Lycius, a young man twenty-five years of age, that going betwixt Cencreas and Corinth, met such a phantasm in the habit of a fair gentlewoman, which taking him by the hand, carried him home to her house, in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a Phœnician by birth, and if he would tarry with her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink such wine as never any drank, and no man should molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would live and die with him, that was fair and lovely to behold. The young man, a philosopher, otherwise staid and discreet, able to moderate his passions, though not this of love, tarried with her a while to his great content, and at last married her, to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures, found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described by Homer, no substance but mere illusions. When she saw herself described, she wept, and desired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all that was in it, vanished in an instant: many thousands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the midst of Greece" (Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, pt. III, sec. ii, mem. i, subs. i).

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he  
flew,

Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,  
And wound with many a river to its head,  
To find where this sweet nymph prepared her  
secret bed: <sup>30</sup>

In vain; the sweet nymph might nowhere be  
found,

And so he rested on the lonely ground,  
Pensive, and full of painful jealousies  
Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.  
There as he stood, he heard a mournful  
voice, <sup>35</sup>

Such as, once heard, in gentle heart destroys  
All pain but pity; thus the lone voice spake:  
"When from this wreathéd tomb shall I  
awake?"

When move in a sweet body fit for life, <sup>39</sup>  
And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife  
Of hearts and lips? Ah, miserable me!"

The God, dove-footed, glided silently  
Round bush and tree, soft-brushing in his  
speed

The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,  
Until he found a palpitating snake, <sup>45</sup>  
Bright and cirque-couchant,<sup>2</sup> in a dusky  
brake.

She was a gordian<sup>3</sup> shape of dazzling hue,  
Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;  
Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson-barred;  
And full of silver moons, that, as she  
breathed, <sup>51</sup>

Dissolved, or brighter shone, or interwreathed  
Their lusters with the gloomier tapestries—  
So rainbow-sided, touched with miseries,  
She seemed, at once, some penanced lady  
elf, <sup>55</sup>

Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.  
Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire  
Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar:<sup>4</sup>

Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!  
She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls  
complete; <sup>60</sup>

And for her eyes—what could such eyes do  
there

But weep and weep, that they were born so  
fair,

As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air?  
Her throat was serpent, but the words she  
spake

Came, as, through bubbling honey, for Love's  
sake, <sup>65</sup>

And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,  
Like a stooped falcon ere he takes his prey:

<sup>2</sup>Lying coiled.

<sup>3</sup>Knotted.

<sup>4</sup>Bacchus gave Ariadne a tiara, or crown, of seven stars which after her death became a constellation.



"Fair Hermes, crowned with feathers,  
fluttering light,  
I had a splendid dream of thee last night:  
I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold, 70  
Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,  
The only sad one; for thou didst not hear  
The soft, lute-fingered Muses chaunting clear,  
Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,  
Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long  
melodious moan. 75  
I dreamed I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,  
Break amorous through the clouds, as morn-  
ing breaks,  
And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,<sup>1</sup>  
Strike for the Cretan isle; and here thou art!  
Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the  
maid?"  
Whereat the star of Lethe<sup>2</sup> not delayed 81  
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired:  
"Thou smooth-lipped serpent, surely high-  
inspired!  
Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,  
Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise, 85  
Telling me only where my nymph is fled—  
Where she doth breathe!" "Bright planet,  
thou hast said,"  
Returned the snake, "but seal with oaths,  
fair God!"  
"I swear," said Hermes, "by my serpent rod,  
And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown!"  
Light flew his earnest words, among the blos-  
soms blown. 91  
Then thus again the brilliance feminine:  
"Too frail of heart! for this lost nymph of  
thine,  
Free as the air, invisibly she strays  
About these thornless wilds; her pleasant days  
She tastes unseen; unseen her nimble feet 96  
Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet:  
From weary tendrils and bowed branches  
green  
She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes un-  
seen:  
And by my power is her beauty veiled 100  
To keep it unaffronted, unassailed  
By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,  
Of Satyrs, Fauns, and bleared Silenus<sup>3</sup> sighs.  
Pale grew her immortality, for woe 105  
Of all these lovers, and she grieved so  
I took compassion on her, bade her steep  
Her hair in weird syrups, that would keep  
Her loveliness invisible, yet free  
To wander as she loves, in liberty. 109  
Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone,  
If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon!"  
Then, once again, the charmed God began

An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran  
Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.<sup>4</sup>  
Ravished, she lifted her Circean head, 115  
Blushed a live damask, and swift-lipping said,  
"I was a woman, let me have once more  
A woman's shape, and charming as before.  
I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss!  
Give me my woman's form, and place me  
where he is. 120  
Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,  
And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even  
now."  
The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,  
She breathed upon his eyes, and swift was  
seen  
Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on  
the green. 125  
It was no dream; or say a dream it was,  
Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly  
pass  
Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.  
One warm, flushed moment, hovering, it  
might seem,  
Dashed by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he  
burned; 130  
Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turned  
To the swooned serpent, and with languid arm,  
Delicate, put to proof the light Caducean  
charm.<sup>5</sup>  
So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent  
Full of adoring tears and blandishment, 135  
And towards her stepped: she, like a moon in  
wane,  
Faded before him, cowered, nor could restrain  
Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower  
That faints into itself at evening hour:  
But the God fostering her chilled hand, 140  
She felt the warmth, her eyelids opened bland,  
And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,  
Bloomed, and gave up her honey to the lees.  
Into the green-recesséd woods they flew;  
Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do. 145  
Left to herself, the serpent now began  
To change; her elfin blood in madness ran;  
Her mouth foamed, and the grass, therewith  
besprent,<sup>6</sup>  
Withered at dew so sweet and virulent; 149  
Her eyes in torture fixed, and anguish drear,  
Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,  
Flashed phosphor and sharp sparks, without  
one cooling tear.  
The colors all inflamed throughout her train,  
She writhed about, convulsed with scarlet  
pain:  
A deep volcanian yellow took the place 155  
Of all her milder-moonéd body's grace;

<sup>1</sup>As one of Phœbus Apollo's arrows.

<sup>2</sup>Hermes is so called because it was one of his duties to lead the souls of the dead to Hades.

<sup>3</sup>Foster-father of Bacchus.

<sup>4</sup>Musical.

<sup>5</sup>Caduceus was the name of Hermes' wand.

<sup>6</sup>Sprinkled.

And, as the lava ravishes the mead,  
 Spoiled all her silver mail, and golden brede:<sup>1</sup>  
 Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks, and  
     bars, 159  
 Eclipsed her crescents, and licked up her stars:  
 So that, in moments few, she was undressed  
 Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,  
 And rubious-argent: of all these bereft,  
 Nothing but pain and ugliness were left. 164  
 Still shone her crown; that vanished, also she  
 Melted and disappeared as suddenly;  
 And in the air, her new voice luting soft,  
 Cried, "Lycius! gentle Lycius!"—Borne aloft  
 With the bright mists about the mountains  
     hoar  
 These words dissolved: Crete's forests heard  
     no more. 170

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,  
 A full-born beauty new and exquisite?  
 She fled into that valley they pass o'er  
 Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore;  
 And rested at the foot of those wild hills, 175  
 The rugged founts of the Peraean rills,  
 And of that other ridge whose barren back  
 Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,  
 South-westward to Cleone. There she stood,  
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood, 180  
 Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,  
 By a clear pool, wherein she passioned  
 To see herself escaped from so sore ills,  
 While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid 185  
 More beautiful than ever twisted braid,  
 Or sighed, or blushed, or on spring-flowered lea  
 Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:  
 A virgin purest lipped, yet in the lore 189  
 Of love deep learned to the red heart's core:  
 Not one hour old, yet of scintial brain  
 To unperplex bliss from its neighbor pain;  
 Define their pettish limits, and estrange  
 Their points of contact, and swift counter-  
     change; 194  
 Intrigue with the specious chaos,<sup>2</sup> and dispart  
 Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art;  
 As though in Cupid's college she had spent  
 Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,<sup>3</sup>  
 And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so faerily 200  
 By the wayside to linger, we shall see;  
 But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse  
 And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,  
 Of all she list, strange or magnificent: 204  
 How, ever, where she willed her spirit went;  
 Whether to faint Elysium, or where

Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids<sup>4</sup>  
     fair  
 Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly  
     stair;  
 Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,  
 Stretched out, at ease, beneath a glutinous  
     pine; 210  
 Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine<sup>5</sup>  
 Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.<sup>6</sup>  
 And sometimes into cities she would send  
 Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend;  
 And once, while among mortals dreaming thus,  
 She saw the young Corinthian Lycius 216  
 Charioting foremost in the envious race,  
 Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,  
 And fell into a swooning love of him.  
 Now on the moth-time of that evening dim 220  
 He would return that way, as well she knew,  
 To Corinth from the shore; for freshly blew  
 The eastern soft-wind, and his galley now  
 Grated the quay-stones with her brazen prow  
 In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle 225  
 Fresh anchored; whither he had been awhile  
 To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there  
 Waits with high marble doors for blood and  
     incense rare.  
 Jove heard his vows, and bettered his desire;  
 For by some freakful chance he made re-  
     tire 230  
 From his companions, and set forth to walk,  
 Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk:  
 Over the solitary hills he fared,  
 Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star ap-  
     peared  
 His phantasy was lost, where reason fades, 235  
 In the calmed twilight of Platonic shades.<sup>7</sup>  
 Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near—  
 Close to her passing, in indifference drear,  
 His silent sandals swept the mossy green;  
 So neighbored to him, and yet so unseen, 240  
 She stood: he passed, shut up in mysteries,  
 His mind wrapped like his mantle, while her  
     eyes  
 Followed his steps, and her neck regal white  
 Turned—syllabing thus: "Ah, Lycius bright,  
 And will you leave me on the hills alone? 245  
 Lycius, look back! and be some pity shown."  
 He did; not with cold wonder, fearingly,  
 But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice;<sup>8</sup>  
 For so delicious were the words she sung,  
 It seemed he had loved them a whole summer  
     long. 250

<sup>4</sup>Sea-nymphs, sisters of Thetis.<sup>5</sup>Palatine.<sup>6</sup>Vulcan's columns gleam, forming covered walks.<sup>7</sup>His thoughtless fancies disappeared while he considered the mysteries of Plato's philosophy.<sup>8</sup>Orpheus succeeded in winning back his wife Eurydice from the world of shades on condition that as they returned to the world he would not look back to see her following him. He, however, so loved her that he could not forbear looking back—whereupon she vanished and returned to Hades.<sup>1</sup>Embroidery.<sup>2</sup>The fair-appearing confusion of joy and pain.<sup>3</sup>Yet unrepurchased.

And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,  
Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,  
And still the cup was full,—while he, afraid  
Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid  
Due adoration, thus began to adore; 255  
Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain  
so sure:

“Leave thee alone! Look back! Ah, Goddess, see

Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee!  
For pity do not this sad heart belie—  
Even as thou vanishest so I shall die. 260  
Stay! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay!  
To thy far wishes will thy streams obey:  
Stay! though the greenest woods be thy domain,

Alone they can drink up the morning rain;  
Though a descended Pleiad,<sup>1</sup> will not one 265  
Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune  
Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine?  
So sweetly to these ravished ears of mine  
Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst fade,

Thy memory will waste me to a shade:— 270  
For pity do not melt!” “If I should stay,”  
Said Lamia, “here, upon this floor of clay,  
And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,

What canst thou say or do of charm enough  
To dull the nice remembrance of my home?  
Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam 276

Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,—  
Empty of immortality and bliss!

Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know  
That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280  
In human climes, and live. Alas! poor youth,  
What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe  
My essence? What serener palaces,  
Where I may all my many senses please,  
And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts appease? 285

It cannot be—adieu!” So said, she rose  
Tiptoe, with white arms spread. He, sick to lose

The glorious promise of her lone complain,  
Swooned, murmuring of love, and pale with pain.

The cruel lady, without any show 290  
Of sorrow for her tender favorite’s woe,  
But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,  
With brighter eyes and slow amenity,  
Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh  
The life she had so tangled in her mesh: 295  
And as he from one trance was wakening  
Into another, she began to sing,—

Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every-thing,—

A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,  
While, like held breath, the stars drew in their panting fires. 300

And then she whispered in such trembling tone

As those who, safe together met alone  
For the first time through many anguished days,

Use other speech than looks; bidding him raise

His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt;  
For that she was a woman, and without 306  
Any more subtle fluid in her veins

Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same pains

Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.  
And next she wondered how his eyes could miss 310

Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,  
She dwelt but half retired, and there had led  
Days happy as the gold coin could invent  
Without the aid of love; yet in content,  
Till she saw him, as once she passed him by,  
Where ’gainst a column he leaned thought-fully 316

At Venus’ temple porch, ’mid baskets heaped  
Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reaped  
Late on that eve, as ’twas the night before  
The Adonian feast;<sup>2</sup> whereof she saw no more,  
But wept alone those days,—for why should she adore? 321

Lycius from death awoke into amaze  
To see her still, and singing so sweet lays;  
Then from amaze into delight he fell  
To hear her whisper woman’s lore so well; 325  
And every word she spake enticed him on  
To unperplexed delight and pleasure known.  
Let the mad poets say whate’er they please  
Of the sweets of Faeries, Peris,<sup>3</sup> Goddesses,  
There is not such a treat among them all— 330  
Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall—

As a real woman, lineal indeed  
From Pyrrha’s pebbles<sup>4</sup> or old Adam’s seed.  
Thus gentle Lamia judged, and judged aright,  
That Lycius could not love in half a fright, 335  
So threw the goddess off, and won his heart  
More pleasantly by playing woman’s part,  
With no more awe than what her beauty gave,  
That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.  
Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340  
Marrying to every word a twin-born sigh;

<sup>1</sup>The Pleiads were seven sisters, changed into the constellation. The concentric spheres which, according to the old astronomy, surrounded the earth, were supposed to make music as they revolved.

<sup>2</sup>Festival in honor of Adonis. He was a beautiful youth loved by Venus. When he was killed by a wild boar she had him carried to Elysium.

<sup>3</sup>A Peri is, according to Persian fable, one descended from the fallen angels.

<sup>4</sup>After the flood Pyrrha and Deucalion, according to legend, cast stones behind them which sprang up human beings, and so they re-peopled the world.



And last, pointing to Corinth, asked her sweet,  
 If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.  
 The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness  
 Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease  
 To a few paces; not at all surmised 346  
 By blinded Lycius, so in her comprised.  
 They passed the city gates, he knew not how,  
 So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350  
 Throughout her palaces imperial,  
 And all her populous streets and temples lewd,  
 Muttered, like tempest in the distance brewed,  
 To the wide-spread night above her towers.  
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool  
 hours, 355  
 Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,  
 Companioned or alone; while many a light  
 Flared, here and there, from wealthy festi-  
 vals,  
 And threw their moving shadows on the walls,  
 Or found them clustered in the corniced  
 shade 360  
 Of some arched temple door or dusky colon-  
 nade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,  
 Her fingers he pressed hard, as one came near  
 With curled gray beard, sharp eyes, and  
 smooth bald crown,  
 Slow-stepped, and robed in philosophic gown:  
 Lycius shrank closer, as they met and passed,  
 Into his mantle, adding wings to haste, 367  
 While hurried Lamia trembled. "Ah," said  
 he,  
 "Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?  
 Why does your tender palm dissolve in  
 dew?"— 370  
 "I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me who  
 Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind  
 His features:—Lycius! wherefore did you  
 blind  
 Yourself from his quick eyes?" Lycius re-  
 plied,  
 "'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide 375  
 And good instructor; but to-night he seems  
 The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams."

While yet he spake they had arrived before  
 A pillared porch, with lofty portal door,  
 Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor  
 glow 380  
 Reflected in the slabbéd steps below,  
 Mild as a star in water; for so new  
 And so unsullied was the marble's hue,  
 So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,  
 Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine  
 Could e'er have touched there. Sounds  
 Æolian<sup>1</sup> 386

Breathed from the hinges, as the ample span  
 Of the wide doors disclosed a place unknown  
 Some time to any, but those two alone,  
 And a few Persian mutes, who that same year  
 Were seen about the markets: none knew  
 where 391  
 They could inhabit; the most curious  
 Were foiled, who watched to trace them to  
 their house:  
 And but the flitter-wingéd verse<sup>2</sup> must tell,  
 For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befell,  
 'Twould humor many a heart to leave them  
 thus 396  
 Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

## PART II

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,  
 Is—Love, forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust;  
 Love in a palace is perhaps at last  
 More grievous torment than a hermit's fast:—  
 That is a doubtful tale from faery land, 5  
 Hard for the non-elect to understand.  
 Had Lycius lived to hand his story down,  
 He might have given the moral a fresh frown,  
 Or clenched it quite: but too short was their  
 bliss  
 To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft  
 voice hiss. 10  
 Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,  
 Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,  
 Hovered and buzzed his wings, with fearful  
 roar,  
 Above the lintel of their chamber door,  
 And down the passage cast a glow upon the  
 floor. 15

For all this came a ruin: side by side  
 They were enthronéd, in the eventide,  
 Upon a couch, near to a curtaining  
 Whose airy texture, from a golden string,  
 Floated into the room, and let appear 20  
 Unveiled the summer heaven, blue and clear.  
 Betwixt two marble shafts:—there they re-  
 posed,  
 Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids  
 closed,  
 Saving a tithe which love still open kept,  
 That they might see each other while they  
 almost slept; 25  
 When from the slope side of a suburb hill,  
 Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill  
 Of trumpets—Lycius started—the sounds fled,  
 But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.  
 For the first time, since first he harbored in 30  
 That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,  
 His spirit passed beyond its golden bourn  
 Into the noisy world almost forsworn.

<sup>1</sup>Musical sounds.

<sup>2</sup>The verse winging its way like a bird.

The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,  
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want 35  
Of something more, more than her empery  
Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh  
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well  
That but a moment's thought is passion's  
passing bell.

"Why do you sigh, fair creature?" whispered  
he: 40

"Why do you think?" returned she tenderly:  
"You have deserted me; where am I now?  
Not in your heart while care weighs on your  
brow:

No, no, you have dismissed me, and I go  
From your breast houseless: ay, it must be  
so." 45

He answered, bending to her open eyes,  
Where he was mirrored small in paradise,  
"My silver planet, both of eve and morn!  
Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,  
While I am striving how to fill my heart 50  
With deeper crimson and a double smart?  
How to entangle, trammel up, and snare  
Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there  
Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose? 54  
Ay, a sweet kiss—you see your mighty woes.  
My thoughts! shall I unveil them? Listen  
then!

What mortal hath a prize, that other men  
May be confounded and abashed withal,  
But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestical,  
And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice 60  
Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.

Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,  
While through the throngéd streets your bridal  
car

Wheels round its dazzling spokes."—The  
lady's cheek

Trembled; she nothing said, but, pale and  
meek, 65

Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain  
Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain  
Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,  
To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,  
Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70

Her wild and timid nature to his aim;  
Besides, for all his love, in self despite,  
Against his better self, he took delight  
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.  
His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue 75  
Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible  
In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.  
Fine was the mitigated fury, like

Apollo's presence when in act to strike  
The serpent—Ha, the serpent! certes, she 80  
Was none. She burned, she loved the  
tyranny,

And, all subdued, consented to the hour  
When to the bridal he should lead his par-  
amour.

Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,  
"Sure some sweet name thou hast, though,  
by my truth, 85

I have not asked it, ever thinking thee  
Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,  
As still I do. Hast any mortal name,  
Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?  
Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth, 90  
To share our marriage feast and nuptial  
mirth?"

"I have no friends," said Lamia, "no, not  
one;

My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:  
My parents' bones are in their dusty urns 94  
Sepulchered, where no kindled incense burns,  
Seeing all their luckless race are dead save me,  
And I neglect the holy rite for thee.

Even as you list invite your many guests;  
But if, as now it seems, your vision rests  
With any pleasure on me, do not bid 100  
Old Apollonius—from him keep me hid."

Lycius, perplexed at words so blind and blank,  
Made close inquiry; from whose touch she  
shrank,

Feigning a sleep; and he to the dull shade  
Of deep sleep in a moment was betrayed. 105

It was the custom then to bring away  
The bride from home at blushing shut of day,  
Veiled, in a chariot, heralded along  
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage  
song,

With other pageants: but this fair unknown  
Had not a friend. So being left alone 111  
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin),  
And knowing surely she could never win  
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,  
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress  
The misery in fit magnificence. 116

She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and whence  
Came, and who were her subtle servitors.

About the halls, and to and from the doors,  
There was a noise of wings, till in short space  
The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-  
archéd grace. 121

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone  
Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan  
Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might  
fade.

Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade 125  
Of palm and plantain, met from either side,  
High in the midst, in honor of the bride:  
Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,  
From either side their stems branched one to  
one

All down the aisled place; and beneath all 130  
There ran a stream of lamps straight on from  
wall to wall.

So canopied, lay an untasted feast  
Teeming with odors. Lamia, regal dressed,

Silently paced about, and as she went,  
 In pale contented sort of discontent, 135  
 Missioned her viewless servants to enrich  
 The fretted splendor of each nook and niche.  
 Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at  
 first,  
 Came jasper panels; then anon there burst  
 Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees, 140  
 And with the larger wove in small intricacies.  
 Approving all, she faded at self-will,  
 And shut the chamber up, close, hushed and  
 still,  
 Complete and ready for the revels rude,  
 When dreadful guests would come to spoil her  
 solitude. 145

The day appeared, and all the gossip rout.  
 O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout  
 The silent-blessing fate, warm cloistered  
 hours,  
 And show to common eyes these secret  
 bowers?  
 The herd approached; each guest, with busy  
 brain, 150  
 Arriving at the portal, gazed amain,  
 And entered marveling: for they knew the  
 street,  
 Remembered it from childhood all complete  
 Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen  
 That royal porch, that high-built fair de-  
 mesne;<sup>1</sup> 155  
 So in they hurried all, mazed, curious and  
 keen;  
 Save one, who looked thereon with eye severe,  
 And with calm-planted steps walked in aus-  
 tere;  
 'Twas Apollonius: something too he laughed,  
 As though some knotty problem, that had  
 daft 160  
 His patient thought, had now begun to thaw  
 And solve and melt: 'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule  
 His young disciple. "'Tis no common rule,  
 Lycius," said he, "for uninvited guest 165  
 To force himself upon you, and infest  
 With an unbidden presence the bright throng  
 Of younger friends; yet must I do this wrong,  
 And you forgive me." Lycius blushed, and led  
 The old man through the inner doors broad-  
 spread; 170  
 With reconciling words and courteous mien  
 Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy luster was the banquet-room,  
 Filled with pervading brilliance and perfume:  
 Before each lucid panel fuming stood 175  
 A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,

Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,  
 Whose slender feet wide-swerved upon the  
 soft  
 Wool-wooféd carpets: fifty wreaths of smoke  
 From fifty censers their light voyage took 180  
 To the high roof, still mimicked as they rose  
 Along the mirrored walls by twin-clouds  
 odorous.  
 Twelve spheréd tables by silk seats insphered,  
 High as the level of a man's breast reared  
 On libbard's<sup>2</sup> paws, upheld the heavy gold 185  
 Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told  
 Of Ceres' horn,<sup>3</sup> and, in huge vessels, wine  
 Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.  
 Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood, 189  
 Each shrining in the midst the image of a God.

When in an antechamber every guest  
 Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure  
 pressed,  
 By ministering slaves, upon his hands and  
 feet,  
 And fragrant oils with ceremony meet 194  
 Poured on his hair, they all moved to the feast  
 In white robes, and themselves in order placed  
 Around the silken couches, wondering  
 Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of  
 wealth could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,  
 While fluent Greek a voweled under-song 200  
 Kept up among the guests, discoursing low  
 At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;  
 But when the happy vintage touched their  
 brains,  
 Louder they talk, and louder come the strains  
 Of powerful instruments:—the gorgeous dyes,  
 The space, the splendor of the draperies, 206  
 The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,  
 Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,  
 Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,  
 And every soul from human trammels freed,  
 No more so strange; for merry wine, sweet  
 wine, 211  
 Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too  
 divine.

Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height;  
 Flushed were their cheeks, and bright eyes  
 double bright;  
 Garlands of every green and every scent 215  
 From vales deflowered or forest-trees branch-  
 rent,  
 In baskets of bright osiered gold<sup>4</sup> were brought,  
 High as the handles heaped, to suit the  
 thought

<sup>2</sup>Leopard's.

<sup>3</sup>Ceres was the goddess of harvests. The horn was symbolic of plenty.

<sup>4</sup>Baskets of woven gold.

<sup>1</sup>Dwelling.



Of every guest; that each, as he did please,  
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillowed at his  
ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia? What for Lycius?  
What for the sage, old Apollonius?  
Upon her aching forehead be there hung  
The leaves of willow<sup>1</sup> and of adder's tongue;  
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him  
The thyrsus,<sup>2</sup> that his watching eyes may  
swim 226

Into forgetfulness; and, for the sage,  
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage  
War on his temples. Do not all charms fly  
At the mere touch of cold philosophy? 230  
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:  
We know her woof, her texture; she is given  
In the dull catalogue of common things.  
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,  
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line, 235  
Empty the haunted air and gnoméd mine—  
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made  
The tender-personed Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,  
Scarce saw in all the room another face, 240  
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took  
Full brimmed, and opposite sent forth a look  
Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance  
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,  
And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher  
Had fixed his eye, without a twinkle or stir,  
Full on the alarméd beauty of the bride, 247  
Brow-beating her fair form and troubling her  
sweet pride.

Lycius then pressed her hand, with devout  
touch,

As pale it lay upon the rosy couch: 250  
'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins;  
Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains  
Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.

"Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost  
thou start?

Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia an-  
swered not. 255

He gazed into her eyes, and not a jot  
Owned they the lovelorn piteous appeal:  
More, more he gazed: his human senses reel:  
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs;  
There was no recognition in those orbs. 260  
"Lamia!" he cried—and no soft-toned reply.  
The many heard, and the loud revelry  
Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;  
The myrtle sickened in a thousand wreaths.  
By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure  
ceased; 265

A deadly silence step by step increased

Until it seemed a horrid presence there,  
And not a man but felt the terror in his  
hair.

"Lamia!" he shrieked; and nothing but the  
shriek

With its sad echo did the silence break. 270  
"Begone, foul dream!" he cried, gazing again  
In the bride's face, where now no azure vein  
Wandered on fair-spaced temples, no soft  
bloom

Misted the cheek, no passion to illumine  
The deep-recesséd vision:—all was blight; 275  
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat, a deadly white.  
"Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless  
man!

Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban  
Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images  
Here represent their shadowy presences, 280  
May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn  
Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,  
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright  
Of conscience, for their long-offended might,  
For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries,  
Unlawful magic, and enticing lies. 286  
Corinthians! look upon that gray-beard  
wretch!

Mark how, possessed, his lashless eyelids  
stretch

Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!  
My sweet bride withers at their potency." 290  
"Fool!" said the sophist, in an undertone  
Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing  
moan

From Lycius answered, as, heart-struck and  
lost,

He sank supine beside the aching ghost.  
"Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes  
still 295

Relented not, nor moved; "from every ill  
Of life have I preserved thee to this day,  
And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?"  
Then Lamia breathed death-breath; the  
sophist's eye, 299

Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly,  
Keen, cruel, perçant,<sup>3</sup> stinging: she, as well  
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,  
Motioned him to be silent; vainly so;  
He looked and looked again a level—No!  
"A serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said, 305  
Than with a frightful scream she vanished;  
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,  
As were his limbs of life, from that same  
night.

On the high couch he lay—his friends came  
round— 309

Supported him; no pulse or breath they found,  
And in its marriage robe the heavy body  
wound.

<sup>1</sup>The weeping-willow, symbolic of grief. "Adder's tongue"  
is the popular name for a certain variety of fern.

<sup>2</sup>A rod wreathed with ivy, the staff of Bacchus.

<sup>3</sup>Piercing.

✕ SONNET<sup>1</sup>

BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as thou  
art—

Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,  
And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Believed to have been written in March, 1819; published in 1848. This was formerly thought to have been the last poem written by Keats, as he wrote the later (and until recently the only known) version of the sonnet after he had embarked for Italy, in September, 1820. This he wrote on a blank page, facing *A Lover's Complaint*, in a folio volume of Shakespeare which he gave to Severn, who accompanied him on his journey.

The moving waters at their priestlike task 5  
Of pure ablution round earth's human  
shores,

Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
Of snow upon the mountains and the  
moors—

No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,  
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening  
breast, 10

To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,

Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

<sup>2</sup>Hermit.

## WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775-1864)

Landor's father came of a Staffordshire family, and was a physician, though he resigned his practice after inheriting property which made him independent. He lived at Warwick and, after his second marriage, spent some of his time at Ipsley Court (Warwickshire), the property of his second wife, Elizabeth Savage. By his first wife he had one daughter; Walter was the eldest of seven children by his second wife, and was born on 30 January, 1775. He was sent first to a school near Warwick (when not yet five years old), and at the age of ten was transferred to Rugby. Though always sturdy, he did not care for athletic sports, but gave his attention seriously to study. He always refused to compete for prizes, but, nevertheless, won a name for himself by the excellence of his Latin verse. His willfulness, however, and quick temper, which were to bring trouble on him throughout his life, presently exhibited themselves in a characteristic way. His tutor, he thought, selected his worst Latin verse for special approval. He expressed his feeling by adding insulting remarks in a copy made for him. A repetition of this offense brought the threat of expulsion and Landor's removal from Rugby. In 1793 he entered Trinity College, Oxford, where he proclaimed himself a republican, and acted as one. He held by this position through all his days, but it should be understood that he was, like his disciple Swinburne, and like Milton before them, an aristocratic republican, believing passionately in liberty, but hating the flattering lie which goes by the name of equalitarianism. In 1794 he fired a gun at the windows of a fellow-collegian who was an objectionable Tory and who had gathered some of his objectionable friends for a noisy party. The shutters were closed, and the republican demonstration had no fatal consequences, but could not pass unnoticed by the authorities. They respected Landor's ability and did not want to debar him from a degree, but he refused to help them by making any explanation or expressing regret. Hence he was rusticated for a year, and, quarreling with his father over the incident, also left the home of his family "for ever." He did not return to Oxford, but did yield to the entreaties of friends who sought to patch up a peace between him and his father, with the result that a small allowance was settled on him. For several years he spent much time in Wales, where he met the family of Lord Aylmer. It was by a tale of Clara Reeves, lent him by Rose Aylmer, that Lan-

dor was led to the composition of *Gebir* (published in 1798). He had in 1795 published a volume of poems, with a Latin defense of writing in Latin, which had attracted no notice; and *Gebir* met the same fate, so far as the general public was concerned, but, like the greater number of Landor's later works, did attract the attention and elicit the warm admiration of a number of the best judges.

For the next seven years Landor led a rather unsettled life, chiefly in Bristol, Bath, and Wales; in 1802 visiting Paris and returning with unalterable prejudices against the French; steadily writing poetry, and contracting debts. In 1805 his father died, and the poet, now enjoying an income of nearly £1000, set up an establishment at Bath. He had several love-affairs, which resulted in some graceful poetry, made the acquaintance of Southey, and then, in 1808, went to Spain to aid in an unsuccessful uprising against the French. Several years later he purchased a great estate in Monmouthshire (Llanthony Abbey), selling for this purpose not only his own, but also his mother's property (which was entailed on him), and obtaining an act of Parliament to legalize the transaction. While he was beginning to carry out large plans for developing his estate, he met at Bath, in 1811, Julia Thuillier, the penniless daughter of an unsuccessful banker, and at once determined to marry her, and did so. It required only three years from this time for him to become involved in every possible difficulty with his property and his neighbors—Landor's neighbors, it has been said, were always utterly deaf to the voice of reason—with the consequence that he decided to leave England, while his mother undertook the management of Llanthony. The departure was the occasion of Landor's first serious quarrel with his wife. After a short stay in France, the couple settled at Como, and then, after Landor had insulted the authorities there and had been forced to leave, settled at Pisa, and, in 1821, at the Palazzo Medici in Florence. The next ten or eleven years were probably the happiest of his life; they were certainly the most fruitful, for in this period (apparently at the suggestion of Southey) he composed the great majority of his *Imaginary Conversations*, two volumes of which were published in 1824, a third in 1828, and a fourth and fifth in 1829. Others in addition were written at this time, but were not published until much later. These *Conversations* classical in their restrained language, in their finished ele-



gance, and in their objectivity, gave Landor a deservedly high reputation as an unexcelled master of English prose and as "a great creative master of historic sentiment and of the human heart." Their range is practically co-extensive with Western civilization, and they exhibit throughout this vast field a sustained power, at once imaginative and critical, which cannot fail to arouse the admiration of cultivated men as long as our civilization may persist. At the same time Landor's very virtues—those of all severely classical art—are of a kind to prevent him, now as in his own day, from becoming popular; for the classical writer, as Sir Sidney Colvin has said, "appeals only to those who know for themselves what is good," while "the romantic writer appeals to everybody, and is often appreciated above his value."

During the years when the *Conversations* were being written, Landor formed several close and enduring friendships with visiting Englishmen, and was persuaded by one of these in 1832 to return to England, where he saw Lamb, Coleridge, Southey, and other friends. In 1835

his difficulties with his wife reached a climax, and, after making financial provision for her and for his children, he went back to England, where he was to remain until 1858, when other difficulties, involving a suit for libel, forced him again to go to Italy. It seems reasonably clear that no woman could have lived happily with Landor, but equally clear that his wife was not well fitted to make the attempt. His violent fits of temper were always of brief duration, but continued to be frequent to the end of his days. His Italian neighbors looked upon him with an odd mixture of respect, amusement, and astonishment, and one of the tales they invented fairly enough represents the man. It was said that when once he threw his cook out of window, he "instantly afterwards thrust out his head with the exclamation, 'Good God, I forgot the violets!'" Yet to many who knew him well he was in life what he always was in his verse and in his prose, an urbane and polished gentleman, dignified, sensitive, delicate in his perceptions, and soundly balanced in his thought. He died in Florence on 17 September, 1864.

### ROSE AYLMER<sup>1</sup>

AH WHAT avails the sceptered race,  
 Ah what the form divine!  
 What every virtue, every grace!  
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.  
 Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes 5  
 May weep, but never see,  
 A night of memories and of sighs  
 I consecrate to thee.

### A FIESOLAN IDYL

(1831)

HERE, where precipitate Spring, with one  
 light bound  
 Into hot Summer's lusty arms, expires,  
 And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,  
 Soft airs that want the lute to play with 'em,  
 And softer sighs that know not what they  
 want, 5  
 Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,  
 Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier ones  
 Of sights in Fiesolè right up above,  
 While I was gazing a few paces off  
 At what they seemed to show me with their  
 nods, 10  
 Their frequent whispers and their pointing  
 shoots,  
 A gentle maid came down the garden-steps  
 And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1806. Written after Landor had heard of the death of Rose Aylmer in India. (The dates given for the poems that follow are those of earliest publication.)

I heard the branches rustle, and stepped forth  
 To drive the ox away, or mule or goat. 15  
 Such I believed it must be. How could I  
 Let beast o'erpower them? When hath wind  
 or rain  
 Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted me,  
 And I (however they might bluster round)  
 Walked off? 'Twere most ungrateful: for  
 sweet scents 20  
 Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter thoughts,  
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory  
 That would let drop without them her best  
 stores.  
 They bring me tales of youth and tones of love.  
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way 25  
 To let all flowers live freely, and all die  
 (Whene'er their Genius bids their souls de-  
 part)  
 Among their kindred in their native place.  
 I never pluck the rose; the violet's head  
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank 30  
 And not reproached me: the ever-sacred cup  
 Of the pure lily hath between my hands  
 Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.  
 I saw the light that made the glossy leaves  
 More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek 35  
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit;  
 I saw the foot that, although half-erect  
 From its gray slipper, could not lift her up  
 To what she wanted: I held down a branch  
 And gathered her some blossoms; since their  
 hour 40  
 Was come, and bees had wounded them, and  
 flies

Of harder wing were working their way  
 through  
 And scattering them in fragments underfoot.  
 So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved;  
 Others, ere broken off, fell into shells, 45  
 Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,  
 And like snow not seen through, by eye or sun:  
 Yet every one her gown received from me  
 Was fairer than the first. I thought not so,  
 But so she praised them to reward my care.  
 I said, "You find the largest."

"This indeed," 51  
 Cried she, "is large and sweet." She held one  
 forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take  
 She knew not, nor did I; but taking it  
 Would best have solved (and this she felt) her  
 doubt. 55

I dared not touch it; for it seemed a part  
 Of her own self; fresh, full, the most mature  
 Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch  
 To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back  
 The boon she tendered, and then, finding not  
 The ribbon at her waist to fix it in, 61  
 Dropped it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

TO IANTHE<sup>1</sup>

(1846)

You smiled, you spoke, and I believed,  
 By every word and smile deceived.  
 Another man would hope no more;  
 Nor hope I what I hoped before:  
 But let not this last wish be vain; 5  
 Deceive, deceive me once again!

## TO THE SAME

(1863)

WELL I remember how you smiled  
 To see me write your name upon  
 The soft sea-sand. "O! what a child!  
 You think you're writing upon stone!"  
 I have since written what no tide 5  
 Shall ever wash away, what men  
 Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide  
 And find Ianthé's name again.

MOTHER, I CANNOT  
MIND MY WHEEL<sup>2</sup>

(1846)

MOTHER, I cannot mind my wheel;  
 My fingers ache, my lips are dry:

<sup>1</sup>Ianthé was Sophia Jane Swift, whom Landor met at Bath about 1800, and who held always thereafter a place in his affections. Her husband was a collateral descendant of Jonathan Swift.

<sup>2</sup>The first four lines are a rendering of a fragment of Sappho (No. 90 in H. T. Wharton's *Sappho*, 5th ed.).

Oh! if you felt the pain I feel!  
 But oh, who ever felt as I?  
 No longer could I doubt him true— 5  
 All other men may use deceit;  
 He always said my eyes were blue,  
 And often swore my lips were sweet.

## TO E. F.

(1846)

NO DOUBT thy little bosom beats  
 When sounds a wedding bell,  
 No doubt it pants to taste the sweets  
 That songs and stories tell.

Awile in shade content to lie, 5  
 Prolong life's morning dream,  
 While others rise at the first fly  
 That glitters on the stream.

I KNOW NOT WHETHER I  
AM PROUD

(1846)

I KNOW not whether I am proud,  
 But this I know, I hate the crowd:  
 Therefore pray let me disengage  
 My verses from the motley page,  
 Where others far more sure to please 5  
 Pour out their choral song with ease.  
 And yet perhaps, if some should tire  
 With too much froth or too much fire,  
 There is an ear that may incline 10  
 Even to words so dull as mine.

DEATH STANDS ABOVE  
ME

(1853)

DEATH stands above me, whispering low  
 I know not what into my ear:  
 Of his strange language all I know  
 Is, there is not a word of fear.

ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH  
BIRTHDAY

(1853)

I STROVE with none, for none was worth my  
 strife,  
 Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;  
 I warmed both hands before the fire of life,  
 It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

## IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

### I. EPICTETUS AND SENECA

(1828)

SENECA. Epictetus, I desired your master, Epaphroditus, to send you hither, having been much pleased with his report of your conduct, and much surprised at the ingenuity of your writings.

EPICTETUS. Then I am afraid, my friend —

SENECA. *My friend!* are these the expressions — Well, let it pass. Philosophers must bear bravely. The people expect it.

EPICTETUS. Are philosophers, then, only philosophers for the people; and, instead of instructing them, must they play tricks before them? Give me rather the gravity of dancing dogs. Their motions are for the rabble; their reverential eyes and pendant paws are under the pressure of awe at a master; but they are dogs, and not below their destinies.

SENECA. Epictetus! I will give you three talents to let me take that sentiment for my own.

EPICTETUS. I would give thee twenty, if I had them, to make it thine.

SENECA. You mean, by lending to it the graces of my language?

EPICTETUS. I mean, by lending it to thy conduct. And now let me console and comfort thee, under the calamity I brought on thee by calling thee *my friend*. If thou art not my friend, why send for me? Enemy I can have none: being a slave, Fortune has now done with me.

SENECA. Continue, then, your former observations. What were you saying?

EPICTETUS. That which thou interruptedst.

SENECA. What was it?

EPICTETUS. I should have remarked that, if thou foundest ingenuity in my writings, thou must have discovered in them some deviation from the plain, homely truths of Zeno and Cleanthes.

SENECA. We all swerve a little from them.

EPICTETUS. In practice too?

SENECA. Yes, even in practice, I am afraid.

EPICTETUS. Often?

SENECA. Too often.

EPICTETUS. Strange! I have been attentive, and yet have remarked but one

difference among you great personages at Rome.

SENECA. What difference fell under your observation?

EPICTETUS. Crates and Zeno and Cleanthes taught us that our desires were to be subdued by philosophy alone. In this city, their acute and inventive scholars take us aside, and show us that there is not only one way, but two.

SENECA. Two ways?

EPICTETUS. They whisper in our ear, "These two ways are philosophy and enjoyment: the wiser man will take the readier, or, not finding it, the alternative." Thou reddeneest.

SENECA. Monstrous degeneracy.

EPICTETUS. What magnificent rings! I did not notice them until thou liftedst up thy hands to heaven, in detestation of such effeminacy and impudence.

SENECA. The rings are not amiss; my rank rivets them upon my fingers: I am forced to wear them. Our emperor gave me one, Epaphroditus another, Tigellinus the third. I cannot lay them aside a single day, for fear of offending the gods, and those whom they love the most worthily.

EPICTETUS. Although they make thee stretch out thy fingers, like the arms and legs of one of us slaves upon a cross.

SENECA. Oh horrible! Find some other resemblance.

EPICTETUS. The extremities of a fig-leaf.

SENECA. Ignoble

EPICTETUS. The claws of a toad, trodden on or stoned.

SENECA. You have great need, Epictetus, of an instructor in eloquence and rhetoric: you want topics and tropes and figures.

EPICTETUS. I have no room for them. They make such a buzz in the house, a man's own wife cannot understand what he says to her.

SENECA. Let us reason a little upon style. I would set you right, and remove from before you the prejudices of a somewhat rustic education. We may adorn the simplicity of the wisest.

EPICTETUS. Thou canst not adorn simplicity. What is naked or defective is susceptible of decoration: what is decorated is simplicity no longer. Thou mayest give another thing in exchange for it; but if thou



wert master of it, thou wouldst preserve it inviolate. It is no wonder that we mortals, little able as we are to see truth, should be less able to express it.

SENECA. You have formed at present no 5 idea of style.

EPICETUS. I never think about it. First, I consider whether what I am about to say is true; then whether I can say it with brevity, in such a manner as that others shall see it as 10 clearly as I do in the light of truth; for, if they survey it as an ingenuity, my desire is ungratified, my duty unfulfilled. I go not with those who dance round the image of Truth, less out of honor to her than to display 15 their agility and address.

SENECA. We must attract the attention of readers by novelty and force and grandeur of expression.

EPICETUS. We must. Nothing is so 20 grand as truth, nothing so forcible, nothing so novel.

SENECA. Sonorous sentences are wanted to awaken the lethargy of indolence.

EPICETUS. Awaken it to what? Here 25 lies the question; and a weighty one it is. If thou awakenest men when they can see nothing and do no work, it is better to let them rest: but will not they, thinkest thou, look up at a rainbow, unless they are called to it by a 30 clap of thunder?

SENECA. Your early youth, Epictetus, has been, I will not say neglected, but cultivated with rude instruments and unskillful hands.

EPICETUS. I thank God for it. Those rude instruments have left the turf lying yet toward the sun; and those unskillful hands have plucked out the docks.

SENECA. We hope and believe that we 40 have attained a vein of eloquence, brighter and more varied than has been hitherto laid open to the world.

EPICETUS. Than any in the Greek?

SENECA. We trust so.

EPICETUS. Than your Cicero's?

SENECA. If the declaration may be made without an offense to modesty. Surely, you cannot estimate or value the eloquence of that noble pleader?

EPICETUS. Imperfectly, not being born in Italy; and the noble pleader is a much less man with me than the noble philosopher. I regret that, having farms and villas, he would

not keep his distance from the pumping up of foul words against thieves, cut-throats, and other rogues; and that he lied, sweated, and thumped his head and thighs, in behalf of those who were no better.

SENECA. Senators must have clients, and must protect them.

EPICETUS. Innocent or guilty?

SENECA. Doubtless.

EPICETUS. If it becomes a philosopher to regret at all, and if I regret what is and might not be, I may regret more what both is and must be. However, it is an amiable thing, and no small merit in the wealthy, even to trifle and play at their leisure hours with philosophy. It cannot be expected that such a personage should espouse her, or should recommend her as an inseparable mate to his heir.

SENECA. I would.

EPICETUS. Yes, Seneca, but thou hast no son to make the match for; and thy recommendation, I suspect, would be given him before he could consummate the marriage. Every man wishes his sons to be philosophers while they are young; but takes especial care, as they grow older, to teach them its insufficiency and unfitness for their intercourse with mankind. The paternal voice says, "You must not be particular; you are about to have a profession to live by: follow those who have thriven the best in it." Now, among these, whatever be the profession, canst thou point out to me one single philoso- 35 pher?

SENECA. Not just now. Nor upon reflection, do I think it feasible.

EPICETUS. Thou indeed mayest live much to thy ease and satisfaction with philosophy, having (they say) two thousand talents.

SENECA. And a trifle to spare—pressed upon me by that godlike youth, my pupil Nero.

45 EPICETUS. Seneca! where God hath placed a mine he hath placed the materials of an earthquake.

SENECA. A true philosopher is beyond the reach of Fortune.

50 EPICETUS. The false one thinks himself so. Fortune cares little about philosophers; but she remembers where she hath set a rich man, and she laughs to see the Destinies at his door.

## II. BOSSUET AND THE DUCHESS DE FONTANGES<sup>1</sup>

(1828)

BOSSUET. Mademoiselle, it is the King's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

FONTANGES. O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His Majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, "Angélique! do not forget to compliment Monseigneur the Bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the Dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him, only that he might be of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are Duchess. Let him be your confessor, my little girl. He has fine manners."

BOSSUET. I dare not presume to ask you, mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply to the condescension of our royal master.

FONTANGES. Oh, yes! you may. I told him I was almost sure I should be ashamed of confessing such naughty things to a person of high rank, who writes like an angel.

BOSSUET. The observation was inspired, mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

FONTANGES. You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you, directly, if you like.

BOSSUET. Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady?

FONTANGES. What is that?

BOSSUET. Do you hate sin?

FONTANGES. Very much.

BOSSUET. Are you resolved to leave it off?

FONTANGES. I have left it off entirely since the King began to love me. I have never said a spiteful word of anybody since.

BOSSUET. In your opinion, mademoiselle, are there no other sins than malice?

FONTANGES. I never stole anything; I never committed adultery; I never coveted my neighbor's wife; I never killed any person, though several have told me they should die for me.

BOSSUET. Vain, idle talk! Did you listen to it?

FONTANGES. Indeed I did, with both ears; it seemed so funny.

BOSSUET. You have something to answer for, then.

FONTANGES. No, indeed, I have not, monseigneur. I have asked many times after them, and found they were all alive; which mortified me.

BOSSUET. So, then! you would really have them die for you?

FONTANGES. Oh, no, no! but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest, or told me fibs; for, if they told me fibs, I would never trust them again. I do not care about them; for the King told me I was only to mind *him*.

BOSSUET. Lowest and highest, we all owe to his Majesty our duty and submission.

FONTANGES. I am sure he has mine: so you need not blame me or question me on that. At first, indeed, when he entered the folding-doors, I was in such a flurry I could hear my heart beat across the chamber; by degrees I cared little about the matter; and at last, when I grew used to it, I liked it rather than not. Now, if this is not confession, what is?

BOSSUET. We must abstract the soul from every low mundane thought. Do you hate the world, mademoiselle?

FONTANGES. A good deal of it: all Picardy, for example, and all Sologne; nothing is uglier—and, oh my life! what frightful men and women!

BOSSUET. I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the Devil?

FONTANGES. Who does not hate the Devil? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so.—I hate you, beast! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

BOSSUET. Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchess de Fontanges! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself?

FONTANGES. Myself! does anyone hate me? Why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst thing in the world: it makes one so very ugly.

BOSSUET. To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies, if we would save our souls.

FONTANGES. That is hard: how can I do it? I see nothing so detestable in mine. Do you? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me; but I cannot hate myself, if I would. As God

<sup>1</sup>Madame de Fontanges was a mistress of Louis XIV. In 1680 Louis created her a duchess with a large pension. In a note Landor quotes the saying of a contemporary that she was "as beautiful as an angel, but as stupid as a basket."

hath not hated me, why should I? Beside, it was he who made the King to love me; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while his Majesty loves me, and calls me his Angélique. They make people more civil about us; and therefore it must be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold: on the contrary, she told me what a fine color and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you rather be a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the King gave you your choice?

BOSSUET. Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

FONTANGES. I am in earnest, as you see.

BOSSUET. Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms: you will be commended for excellences which do not belong to you; and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it, you are unhappy; if you accept it, you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

FONTANGES. There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly: it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned—what was it? my intellect. He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel; worth (let me whisper it in your ear—do I lean too hard?) a thousand Montespans. But his Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable*! (what is that?) and that he adored me; holding my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

BOSSUET. I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

FONTANGES. You may do anything with me but convert me: you must not do that; I am a Catholic born. M. de Turenne and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics: you did right there. The King told the chan-

cellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but to get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly—did not you? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterward in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when everyone is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so; for people might think her insincere in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

BOSSUET. It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

FONTANGES. I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turenne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

BOSSUET. To what do you refer, mademoiselle?

FONTANGES. That you have overcome quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that?

BOSSUET. By the grace of God.

FONTANGES. Yes, indeed; but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

BOSSUET. It has appeared among us but lately.

FONTANGES. Oh, dear me! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

BOSSUET. Really! I never heard so.

FONTANGES. I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

BOSSUET. In what, mademoiselle?

FONTANGES. In quietism; that is, when I fell asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fénelon should incline to it,<sup>1</sup> as they say he does.

BOSSUET. Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

<sup>1</sup>The opinions of Molinos on Mysticism and Quietism had begun to spread abroad; but Fénelon, who had acquired already a very high celebrity for eloquence, had not yet written on the subject. We may well suppose that Bossuet was among the earliest assailants of a system which he afterward attacked so vehemently. The stormier superstition swept away the more vapory. (Landor.)



FONTANGES. Is not then M. de Fénélon thought a very pious and learned person?

BOSSUET. And justly.

FONTANGES. I have read a great way in a romance he has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The King says there are many such about his court; but I never saw them nor heard of them before. The Marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold; and I got through, I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto, I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays d'Aunis*, where the King has promised him a famous *heretic-hunt*. He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature: he understands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

BOSSUET. Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honor of absolving you, it would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labors.

FONTANGES. You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The King assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

BOSSUET. That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven—

FONTANGES. O monseigneur, I always did so—every time but once—you quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my Lord, you compose such pretty funeral sermons, I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing you preach mine.

BOSSUET. Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence! May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point

triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared: I am advanced in age; you are a child.

FONTANGES. Oh, no! I am seventeen.

BOSSUET. I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. Alas, it is so! such things have been. There is, however, no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

FONTANGES. I never minded them: I like peaches better: and one day is quite enough for me.

BOSSUET. We say that our days are few; and, saying it, we say too much. Marie-Angélique, we have but one: the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it; the next moment may strike it off from us; the next sentence I would utter may be broken and fall between us.<sup>2</sup> The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and color, without admirer, friend, companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges! think on this! Lady! so live as to think on it undisturbed!

FONTANGES. O God! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck: take them off, and let us talk on other things. What was it that dropped

<sup>2</sup>Though Bossuet was capable of uttering and even of feeling such a sentiment, his conduct towards Fénélon, the fairest apparition that Christianity ever presented, was ungenerous and unjust.

While the diocese of Cambray was ravaged by Louis, it was spared by Marlborough; who said to the Archbishop that, if he was sorry he had not taken Cambray, it was chiefly because he lost for a time the pleasure of visiting so great a man. Peterborough, the next of our generals in glory, paid his respects to him some years afterward. (Landor.)

<sup>1</sup>Bossuet was in his 54th year; Mademoiselle de Fontanges died in child-bed the year following: he survived her 23. (Landor.)

on the floor as you were speaking? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

BOSSUET. Never mind it: leave it there; I pray you, I implore you, madame!

FONTANGES. Why do you rise? Why do you run? Why not let me? I am nimbler. So, your ring fell from your hand, my Lord Bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

BOSSUET. Madame is too condescending: had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shriveled: the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition; a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

FONTANGES. It pleases me vastly: I admire rubies. I will ask the King for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him: but that is impossible, you know; for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself: he said but yesterday—

“Such a sweet creature is worth a world”;

and no actor on the stage was more like a king than his Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and wrinkled for so great a monarch; and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him, he looks so close at things.

BOSSUET. Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

FONTANGES. Well, I think so too, though I did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

### III. THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCESS DASHKOF<sup>1</sup>

(1829)

CATHARINE. Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes, we perish.

<sup>1</sup>It is unnecessary to inform the generality of readers that Catharine was not present at the murder of her husband, nor is it easy to believe that Clytemnestra was at the murder of

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes; hark! they heard me: they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned 5 but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed, indeed, is rather of the 10 highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

DASHKOF. I hear nothing.

CATHARINE. My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me 15 come.—Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There!—there again! The drops are now like lead: every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress.—How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What tramping and lapping! the creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

DASHKOF. Oh, heavens!

CATHARINE. Are you afraid?

DASHKOF. There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

CATHARINE. You turn pale and tremble. 30 You should have supported me, in case I had required it.

DASHKOF. I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could anyone of these miscreants make me tremble. But the 35 husband slain by his wife!—I saw not into my heart; I looked not into it, and it chastises me.

CATHARINE. Dashkof, are you, then, really unwell?

DASHKOF. What will Russia, what will 40 Europe, say?

CATHARINE. Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence; but my artillery (for now, indeed, I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet 45 her.

DASHKOF. God grant—

CATHARINE. I cannot but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof! God grant, forsooth!

50 hers. Our business is character. (Landor.) Actually Catharine was at Peterhof, and the Czar Peter III at Ropcha, 15 miles distant, when he was murdered on 17 July, 1762. The only remaining heir to the throne of Russia was Ivan, an idiot and a prisoner. Two years later he was slain by his guards to prevent his forcible liberation, and his would-be rescuer was executed.

He has granted all we wanted from him at present—the safe removal of this odious Peter.

DASHKOF. Yet Peter loved *you*; and even the worst husband must leave, surely, the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort; at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then, there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovereignty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

CATHARINE. Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the Stoic school? Are not they, rather, the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamiast from Livonia or Bessarabia? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death?

DASHKOF. It is not his death that shocks me.

CATHARINE. I understand you: beside, you said as much before.

DASHKOF. I fear for your renown.

CATHARINE. And for your own good name—aye, Dashkof?

DASHKOF. He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

CATHARINE. You hated him.

DASHKOF. Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

CATHARINE. Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary; that my own life was in danger; that I fell upon my knees to soften the conspirators; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms; and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace.

DASHKOF. Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

CATHARINE. She shall be both, God willing.

DASHKOF. The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

CATHARINE. The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovereign may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine?

DASHKOF. I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it, is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment; particularly, if anyone in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honor, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all: that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

CATHARINE. True; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we cannot have power; but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

DASHKOF. Truly, then, may I congratulate you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

CATHARINE. I know and feel it.

DASHKOF. I wish you always may.

CATHARINE. I doubt not the stability of power: I can make constant both fortune and love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit: she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend even the autocracy.

DASHKOF. Indeed I do, and most heartily.

CATHARINE. How?

DASHKOF. I know very well what those intended who first composed the word; but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself—of all power the most enviable, and the least consistent with power over others.

I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council-board inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

CATHARINE. The members of the council-board did not sit *at* it, but *upon* it; and their



tactics were performed cross-legged. What partisans are to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon?

DASHKOF. Peter was not insensible to glory; few men are: but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardor to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated; but it is beyond the power of fortune, or even of genius, to exalt us above the dust.

CATHARINE. Dashkof, you are a sensible, sweet creature; but rather too romantic on *principle*, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat*. Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it one in another: in women it renders them what they would fain call "scornful" (vain assumption of high prerogative!) and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation, which I know is dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuffbox each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a toothpick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis; a watch-chain, Venus; a ring, Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

DASHKOF. He was Frederick's.

CATHARINE. I shall be the *Pucelle* of Russia. No! I had forgotten: he has treated her scandalously.<sup>1</sup>

DASHKOF. Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation; who crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV; and that worse monster, the king his predecessor? He reviled, with every indignity and indecency, the woman who rescued France; and who alone, of all that ever led the armies of that kingdom, made its conquerors—the English—tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and

cackling at one breath defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural: the English recruits deserted; they would not fight against God.

CATHARINE. Fools and bigots!

DASHKOF. The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The Maid of Orleans was pious and sincere: her life asserted it: her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr—the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and savior of her country.

CATHARINE. Be it so; but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent, troublesome qualms.

DASHKOF. If Deism had been prevalent in Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity; and, if the French had been Protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up no one; for he gives no one hope. He may amuse: dullness itself must be amused, indeed, by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

CATHARINE. While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble. This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

DASHKOF. Alas! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

CATHARINE. I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney.<sup>2</sup> I detest him as much as you do; but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly? You really, then, fancy that people care for truth? Innocent Dashkof! Believe me, there is nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it? Or, rather, can you mention to me anyone who has not been in raptures when he could communicate such glad tidings? The goutiest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him.

<sup>1</sup>The allusion is to Voltaire's epic, *La Pucelle*—the Maid of Orleans.

<sup>2</sup>Voltaire's place of abode.

Men, in general, are so weak in truth, that they are obliged to put their bravery under it to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on their courage, when the bravest of them is by many degrees less courageous than a mastiff-bitch in the straw? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof; do not begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas! I cannot always be so. Heigho! But serfs and preferment will do: none shall refuse me at ninety,—Paphos or Tobolsk.<sup>1</sup>

Have not you a song for me?

DASHKOF. German or Russian?

CATHARINE. Neither, neither. Some frightful word might drop—might remind me—no, nothing shall remind me. French, rather: French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

DASHKOF. It is rather in streaks and mottles; excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

CATHARINE. I am heated and thirsty: I cannot imagine how. I think we have not yet taken our coffee. Was it so strong? What am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then*, and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember, too, you are to catch me, and to cry

for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet; and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet!—how stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth. I am courageous, but I am full of weaknesses. I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and—to a friend I may say it—the most amiable part of women. Ho, ho! at last you smile: now, your thoughts upon that.

DASHKOF. I have heard fifty men swear it.

CATHARINE. They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talking of the sad necessity.—Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little *protégé*, who shall attempt to rescue him. I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are given that Ivan be dispatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle; in short, at the fire of the sentry. But not now—another time: two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing: do not make me wait, my dearest creature! Now cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Give it me, then; give it me. I will hold it for you: I must play with something.

Sing, sing; I am quite impatient.

<sup>1</sup>I. e., they shall choose between Venus and Exile.

## THOMAS DE QUINCEY (1785-1859)

Leslie Stephen wrote, in a sentence which he later removed from his essay in *Hours in a Library*, "For seventy-three years De Quincey had been carrying on an operation which for want of a better term we must describe as living, but which would be more fitly described by some mode of speech indicating an existence on the borders of dreamland and reality." Doubtless this is an exaggeration, yet undeniably it expresses the impression De Quincey makes, and always will make, on many people. The publication a generation ago of a full-length biography made De Quincey's life credible, if it did not make his nature comprehensible, but no amount of information or analysis can gloss over the fact that De Quincey in the flesh was one of the strangest creatures the world has known. He was born in Manchester, where his father was a merchant, on 15 August, 1785. Of his father, who died when Thomas was still a child, he never saw anything, and of his mother, who showed no signs of really understanding him, one is tempted to say he saw too much. He was a frail child, and in his earliest days, as in his later ones, he lived the life of a solitary. In 1796 his mother moved to Bath and placed Thomas at school there. Later he was sent to Winkfield School, in Wiltshire. He showed astonishing precocity, and at fifteen was ready to enter Oxford. Instead, however, he was sent to Manchester Grammar School to mark time for three years, so that he might gain a scholarship at Brasenose College. He strongly rebelled against this waste of time; "I ask," he wrote to his mother, "whether a person can be happy, or even simply easy, who is in a situation which deprives him of health, of society, of amusement, of liberty, of congeniality of pursuits, and which, to complete the precious picture, admits of no variety." But his pleas were met with denial, so that in the end, in desperation, he ran away. His experiences he describes in his *Confessions*. In the spring of 1803 he was discovered by friends, brought home, and finally allowed to go to Oxford, where he entered Worcester College because of the smallness of his allowance. He came to be known in Oxford "as a strange being who associated with no one." He says himself: "For the first two years I compute that I did not utter one hundred words." It was at this time that he began the use of opium, though the first period of his great excesses did not come until his twenty-ninth year. At Oxford he extended his acquaintance with the Greek and Latin classics, studied

Hebrew and German, and read widely in English literature. But he took no degree. Being displeased with the conduct of his examinations, in particular at not being allowed to answer questions in Greek, he simply disappeared, as he later did more than once on other occasions.

During several years after he left Oxford De Quincey led a rather wandering existence, becoming acquainted at one place or another with a number of literary people, among them Lamb, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey. Wordsworth he regarded with peculiar veneration, and in 1809 he settled at Grasmere in the Lake country in order to be near the Wordsworths. He did not, however, become really intimate with them, and in the course of time broke with them completely. It has been supposed that the break was at least partly caused by De Quincey's marriage in 1816 to Margaret Simpson, the daughter of a Westmoreland dalesman and a girl of social station inferior to Mrs. Wordsworth's. However unsuited to him De Quincey's wife was—and it is practically impossible to imagine any woman who would have made him a suitable wife—she at least may be said to have put him in the way of beginning his literary career. For soon after his marriage he found his money exhausted and he was compelled to turn from the reading of German literature and philosophy to writing for a living. It was in this way that he came to write, in 1821, the *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* for the *London Magazine*. The work immediately aroused wide and keen interest, and De Quincey thereafter always found periodicals open for all that he could write. About 1830 he removed to Edinburgh, and maintained a home there for his family throughout the remainder of his life. He often even lived with his family, though he kept separate lodgings for himself in Edinburgh, and kept rooms for some years also in Glasgow, and perhaps elsewhere, for he remained always likely to disappear suddenly for indefinite periods. The years of his worst opium-excesses were 1813, 1817, 1823, and 1844. After 1844, however, though he continued to drink laudanum until his death, he managed to keep the quantity within a moderate compass. During all these years he wrote voluminously for periodicals, though besides the *Confessions* he composed only two extended works, his romance, *Klosterheim* (1839), and his *Logic of Political Economy* (1844). Though we hear less of them in his later years, he frequently suffered from what he called "pecuniary



embarrassments," not so much because his income was insufficient as because he was completely incapable of taking care of his money. He died in Edinburgh on 8 December, 1859. An acquaintance, J. R. Findlay, thus described his appearance as an old man: "He was a very little man (about five feet, three or four inches); his countenance the most remarkable for its intellectual attractiveness that I have ever seen. His features, though not regular, were aristocratically fine, and an air of delicate breeding pervaded the face. His forehead was unusually high, square, and compact. At first sight his face appeared boyishly fresh and smooth, with a sort of hectic glow upon it that contrasted strangely with the evident appearances of age in the grizzled hair and dim-looking eyes. The flush or bloom on the cheeks was, I have no doubt, an effect of his constant use of opium; and the apparent smoothness of the face disappeared upon examination."

De Quincey was, like Coleridge and Lamb, widely read in the great English prose writers of the first half of the seventeenth century, and this is one secret of the richness and majesty of his

style. His biographer, A. H. Japp, has indicated the qualities of his mind which we find united in the *Confessions*: "De Quincey himself, in descanting on the dream-faculty, says, 'Habitually to dream magnificently, a man must have a constitutional determination to reverie.' In that sentence he announces the true law of all literature that comes under the order of pure fantasy. But in his case, in spite of the strength of the dream-element, we cannot proceed far till we discover that his determination to reverie was but the extreme projection of one phase of a phenomenal nature balancing its opposite. . . . He was skilled in the exercises of the analytic understanding—a logician exacting and precise—else his dreaming had never gained for him the eminence it has gained. Surely it is calculated to strike the most casual reader on a perusal of . . . the *Confessions*, that his power of following up sensational effects and tracing with absolute exactness the most delicately varying shades of experience, and recording them with conscientious precision, were as noticeable as were the dreams to which they served to give effect."

## CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER<sup>1</sup>

### I

I HAVE often been asked how I came to be a regular opium-eater; and have suffered, very unjustly, in the opinion of my acquaintance, from being reputed to have brought upon myself all the sufferings which I shall have to record, by a long course of indulgence in this practice purely for the sake of creating an artificial state of pleasurable excitement. This, however, is a misrepresentation of my case. True it is, that for nearly ten years I did occasionally take opium for the sake of the exquisite pleasure it gave me; but, so long as I took it with this view, I was effectually protected from all material bad consequences by the necessity of interposing long intervals between the several acts of indulgence, in order to renew the pleasurable sensations. It was not for the purpose of creating pleasure, but of mitigating pain in the severest degree, that I first began to use opium as an article of daily diet. In the twenty-eighth year of my age, a

most painful affection of the stomach, which I had first experienced about ten years before, attacked me in great strength. This affection had originally been caused by extremities of hunger, suffered in my boyish days. During the season of hope and redundant happiness which succeeded (that is, from eighteen to twenty-four) it had slumbered: for the three following years it had revived at intervals; and now, under unfavorable circumstances, from depression of spirits, it attacked me with a violence that yielded to no remedies but opium. As the youthful sufferings which first produced this derangement of the stomach were interesting in themselves and in the circumstances that attended them, I shall here briefly retrace them.

My father died when I was about seven years old, and left me to the care of four guardians. I was sent to various schools, great and small; and was very early distinguished for my classical attainments, especially for my knowledge of Greek. At thirteen I wrote Greek with ease; and at fifteen my command of that language was so great that I not only composed Greek verses in lyric meters, but could converse in Greek fluently, and without embarrassment—an accomplishment which I have not since met with in any scholar of my times, and which, in my case, was owing to the practice of daily

<sup>1</sup>The *Confessions* were first published as a book in 1822. In 1856 De Quincey published, as part of a collected edition of his works, a greatly enlarged version. The text used in these selections is that of 1822, which has been generally preferred by critics and which there is some reason for believing that De Quincey himself preferred. Words inside square brackets replace dashes in the original edition.

reading off the newspapers into the best Greek I could furnish *extempore*; for the necessity of ransacking my memory and invention for all sorts and combinations of periphrastic expressions, as equivalents for modern ideas, images, relations of things, *etc.*, gave me a compass of diction which would never have been called out by a dull translation of moral essays, *etc.* "That boy," said one of my masters, pointing the attention of a stranger to me, "that boy could harangue an Athenian mob better than you or I could address an English one." He who honored me with this eulogy was a scholar, "and a ripe and good one,"<sup>1</sup> and, of all my tutors, was the only one whom I loved or revered. Unfortunately for me (and, as I afterwards learned, to this worthy man's great indignation), I was transferred to the care, first of a blockhead,<sup>2</sup> who was in a perpetual panic lest I should expose his ignorance; and, finally, to that of a respectable scholar,<sup>3</sup> at the head of a great school on an ancient foundation. This man had been appointed to his situation by [Brasenose] College, Oxford; and was a sound, well-built scholar, but (like most men whom I have known from that college) coarse, clumsy, and inelegant. A miserable contrast he presented, in my eyes, to the Etonian brilliancy of my favorite master; and, besides, he could not disguise from my hourly notice the poverty and meagerness of his understanding. It is a bad thing for a boy to be, and know himself, far beyond his tutors, whether in knowledge or in power of mind. This was the case, so far as regarded knowledge at least, not with myself only; for the two boys who jointly with myself composed the first form were better Grecians than the head-master, though not more elegant scholars, nor at all more accustomed to sacrifice to the graces. When I first entered, I remember that we read Sophocles; and it was a constant matter of triumph to us, the learned triumvirate of the first form, to see our "Archididascalus"<sup>4</sup> (as he loved to be called) conning our lesson before we went up, and laying a regular train, with lexicon and grammar, for blowing up and blasting (as it were) any difficulties he found in

the choruses; whilst *we* never condescended to open our books until the moment of going up, and were generally employed in writing epigrams upon his wig, or some such important matter. My two class-fellows were poor, and dependent for their future prospects at the university on the recommendation of the head-master; but I, who had a small patrimonial property, the income of which was sufficient to support me at college, wished to be sent thither immediately. I made earnest representations on the subject to my guardians but all to no purpose. One, who was more reasonable, and had more knowledge of the world than the rest, lived at a distance; two of the other three resigned all their authority into the hands of the fourth; and this fourth, with whom I had to negotiate, was a worthy man in his way, but haughty, obstinate, and intolerant of all opposition to his will. After a certain number of letters and personal interviews, I found that I had nothing to hope for, not even a compromise of the matter, from my guardian: unconditional submission was what he demanded; and I prepared myself, therefore, for other measures. Summer was now coming on with hasty steps, and my seventeenth birthday was fast approaching; after which day I had sworn within myself that I would no longer be numbered amongst schoolboys. Money being what I chiefly wanted, I wrote to a woman of high rank,<sup>5</sup> who, though young herself, had known me from a child, and had latterly treated me with great distinction, requesting that she would "lend" me five guineas.<sup>7</sup> For upwards of a week no answer came; and I was beginning to despond, when, at length, a servant put into my hands a double letter, with a coronet on the seal. The letter was kind and obliging; the fair writer was on the sea-coast, and in that way the delay had arisen; she enclosed double of what I had asked, and good-naturedly hinted that if I should *never* repay her it would not absolutely ruin her. Now, then, I was prepared for my scheme: ten guineas, added to about two which I had remaining from my pocket money, seemed to me sufficient for an indefinite length of time; and at that happy age, if no *definite* boundary can be assigned to

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Henry VIII.*, IV, ii, 51-52. The master was a Mr. Morgan, of Bath Grammar School.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Spencer, of Winkfield School.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Lawson, of Manchester Grammar School.

<sup>4</sup>Head-master (Greek).

<sup>5</sup>The Rev. Samuel Hall, at one time De Quincey's tutor.

<sup>6</sup>Lady Carbery, a young friend of Mrs. De Quincey's, about ten years older than De Quincey.

<sup>7</sup>About \$25.



one's power, the spirit of hope and pleasure makes it virtually infinite.

It is a just remark of Dr. Johnson's<sup>1</sup>(and, what cannot often be said of his remarks, it is a very feeling one) that we never do anything consciously for the last time (of things, that is, which we have long been in the habit of doing), without sadness of heart. This truth I felt deeply when I came to leave [Manchester], a place which I did not love, and where I had not been happy. On the evening before I left [Manchester] for ever, I grieved when the ancient and lofty school-room resounded with the evening service, performed for the last time in my hearing; and at night, when the muster-roll of names was called over, and mine (as usual) was called first, I stepped forward, and, passing the head-master, who was standing by, I bowed to him, and looked earnestly in his face, thinking to myself, "He is old and infirm, and in this world I shall not see him again." I was right; I never *did* see him again, nor ever shall. He looked at me complacently, smiled good-naturedly, returned my salutation (or rather my valediction), and we parted (though he knew it not) for ever. I could not reverence him intellectually; but he had been uniformly kind to me, and had allowed me many indulgences; and I grieved at the thought of the mortification I should inflict upon him.

The morning came, which was to launch me into the world, and from which my whole succeeding life has, in many important points, taken its coloring. I lodged in the head-master's house, and had been allowed, from my first entrance, the indulgence of a private room, which I used both as a sleeping room and as a study. At half after three I rose, and gazed with deep emotion at the ancient towers of [the Collegiate Church], "dressed in earliest light," and beginning to crimson with the radiant luster of a cloudless July morning. I was firm and immovable in my purpose, but yet agitated by anticipation of uncertain danger and troubles; and if I could have foreseen the hurricane and perfect hail-storm of affliction which soon fell upon me, well might I have been agitated. To this agitation the deep peace of the morning presented an affecting contrast, and in some degree a medicine. The

silence was more profound than that of midnight: and to me the silence of a summer morning is more touching than all other silence, because, the light being broad and strong, as that of noon-day at other seasons of the year, it seems to differ from perfect day chiefly because man is not yet abroad; and thus the peace of nature, and of the innocent creatures of God, seems to be secure and deep, only so long as the presence of man, and his restless and unquiet spirit, are not there to trouble its sanctity. I dressed myself, took my hat and gloves, and lingered a little in the room. For the last year and a half this room had been my "pensive citadel";<sup>2</sup> here I had read and studied through all the hours of night: and, though true it was that for the latter part of this time I, who was framed for love and gentle affections, had lost my gayety and happiness, during the strife and fever of contention with my guardian; yet, on the other hand, as a boy so passionately fond of books, and dedicated to intellectual pursuits, I could not fail to have enjoyed many happy hours in the midst of general dejection. I wept as I looked round on the chair, hearth, writing-table, and other familiar objects, knowing too certainly that I looked upon them for the last time. Whilst I write this, it is eighteen years ago; and yet, at this moment, I see distinctly, as if it were yesterday, the lineaments and expressions of the object on which I fixed my parting gaze; it was a picture of the lovely—,<sup>3</sup> which hung over the mantel-piece, the eyes and mouth of which were so beautiful, and the whole countenance so radiant with benignity and divine tranquillity, that I had a thousand times laid down my pen, or my book, to gather consolation from it, as a devotee from his patron saint. Whilst I was yet gazing upon it, the deep tones of [the Collegiate Church] clock proclaimed that it was four o'clock. I went up to the picture, kissed it, and then gently walked out, and closed the door for ever!

. . . . .

So blended and intertwined in this life are occasions of laughter and of tears, that I cannot yet recall, without smiling, an in-

<sup>2</sup>From Wordsworth's sonnet, *Nuns Fret not at their Convent's Narrow Room*, l. 3.

<sup>3</sup>It was really a portrait of an unknown lady, according to a tradition in the school a copy from Vandyke.

<sup>1</sup>In the *Idler*, No. 103, with which the periodical ended.



cident which occurred at that time, and which had nearly put a stop to the immediate execution of my plan. I had a trunk of immense weight; for, besides my clothes, it contained nearly all my library. The difficulty was to get this removed to a carrier's: my room was at an aerial elevation in the house, and (what was worse) the staircase which communicated with this angle of the building was accessible only by a gallery, which passed the head-master's chamber-door. I was a favorite with all the servants; and knowing that any of them would screen me, and act confidentially, I communicated my embarrassment to a groom of the head-master's. The groom swore he would do anything I wished; and, when the time arrived, went upstairs to bring the trunk down. This I feared was beyond the strength of any one man: however, the groom was a man

Of Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear  
The weight of mightiest monarchies;<sup>1</sup>

and had a back as spacious as Salisbury Plain.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly he persisted in bringing down the trunk alone, whilst I stood waiting at the foot of the last flight, in anxiety for the event. For some time I heard him descending with slow and firm steps; but, unfortunately, from his trepidation, as he drew near the dangerous quarter, within a few steps of the gallery, his foot slipped; and the mighty burden, falling from his shoulders, gained such increase of impetus at each step of the descent, that, on reaching the bottom, it tumbled, or rather leaped, right across, with the noise of twenty devils, against the very bedroom door of the Archididascalus. My first thought was, that all was lost; and that my only chance for executing a retreat was to sacrifice my baggage. However, on reflection, I determined to abide the issue. The groom was in the utmost alarm, both on his own account and on mine: but, in spite of this, so irresistibly had the sense of the ludicrous, in this unhappy *contretemps*,<sup>3</sup> taken possession of his fancy, that he sang out a long, loud, and canorous<sup>4</sup> peal of laughter, that might have wakened the Seven Sleepers.<sup>5</sup> At the sound of this resonant merriment,

within the very ears of insulted authority, I could not myself forbear joining in it: subdued to this, not so much by the unhappy *étourderie*<sup>6</sup> of the trunk, as by the effect it had upon the groom. We both expected, as a matter of course, that Dr. [Lawson]<sup>7</sup> would sally out of his room; for, in general, if but a mouse stirred, he sprang out like a mastiff from his kennel. Strange to say, however, on this occasion, when the noise of laughter had ceased, no sound, or rustling even, was to be heard in the bedroom. Dr. [Lawson] had a painful complaint, which, sometimes keeping him awake, made his sleep, perhaps, when it did come, the deeper. Gathering courage from the silence, the groom hoisted his burden again, and accomplished the remainder of his descent without accident. I waited until I saw the trunk placed on a wheelbarrow, and on its road to the carrier's: then, "with Providence my guide,"<sup>8</sup> I set off on foot, carrying a small parcel, with some articles of dress, under my arm: a favorite English poet in one pocket; and a small 12mo. volume, containing about nine plays of Euripides, in the other.

It had been my intention, originally, to proceed to Westmoreland, both from the love I bore to that county, and on other personal accounts.<sup>9</sup> Accident, however, gave a different direction to my wanderings, and I bent my steps towards North Wales.<sup>10</sup>

## II

Soon after this,<sup>11</sup> I contrived, by means which I must omit for want of room,<sup>12</sup> to transfer myself to London. And now began the latter and fiercer stage of my long sufferings; without using a disproportionate expression, I might say, of my agony. For I now suffered, for upwards of sixteen weeks, the physical anguish of hunger in various degrees of intensity; but as bitter, perhaps,

<sup>6</sup>Headless trick.

<sup>7</sup>De Quincey explained in the edition of 1856 that he had created him a doctor in order "to evade too close an approach to the realities of the case, and consequently to personalities" which might have displeased others.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. the last four lines of *Paradise Lost*.

<sup>9</sup>He wished to see Wordsworth.

<sup>10</sup>De Quincey actually went first to Chester, where he saw some members of his family, and then journeyed into Wales.

<sup>11</sup>After a period of some days spent in Wales.

<sup>12</sup>He borrowed twelve guineas (about \$60) from two lawyers whom he encountered in the Snowdon district.

<sup>1</sup>Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II, 306-7.

<sup>2</sup>In Wiltshire.

<sup>3</sup>Accident.

<sup>4</sup>Ringingly.

<sup>5</sup>Christian youths of Ephesus who, according to legend, hid themselves in a cave during the persecution under Decius (A. D. 249-251) and slept there for several hundred years.

as ever any human being can have suffered who has survived it. I would not needlessly harass my reader's feelings by a detail of all that I endured; for extremities such as these, under any circumstances of heaviest misconduct or guilt, cannot be contemplated, even in description, without a rueful pity that is painful to the natural goodness of the human heart. Let it suffice, at least on this occasion, to say that a few fragments of bread from the breakfast-table of one individual<sup>1</sup> (who supposed me to be ill, but did not know of my being in utter want), and these at uncertain intervals, constituted my whole support. During the former part of my sufferings (that is, generally in Wales, and always for the first two months in London), I was houseless, and very seldom slept under a roof. To this constant exposure to the open air I ascribe it mainly that I did not sink under my torments. Latterly, however, when colder and more inclement weather came on, and when, from the length of my sufferings, I had begun to sink into a more languishing condition, it was, no doubt, fortunate for me that the same person to whose breakfast-table I had access allowed me to sleep in a large, unoccupied house, of which he was tenant. Unoccupied, I call it, for there was no household or establishment in it; nor any furniture, indeed, except a table and a few chairs. But I found, on taking possession of my new quarters, that the house already contained one single inmate, a poor, friendless child, apparently ten years old; but she seemed hunger-bitten; and sufferings of that sort often make children look older than they are. From this forlorn child I learned that she had slept and lived there alone for some time before I came; and great joy the poor creature expressed, when she found that I was in future to be her companion through the hours of darkness. The house was large; and, from the want of furniture, the noise of the rats made a prodigious echoing on the spacious staircase and hall; and, amidst the real fleshly ills of cold, and, I fear, hunger, the forsaken child had found lei-

sure to suffer still more (it appeared) from the self-created one of ghosts. I promised her protection against all ghosts whatsoever; but, alas! I could offer her no other assistance. We lay upon the floor, with a bundle of cursed law papers for a pillow, but with no other covering than a sort of large horseman's cloak; afterwards, however, we discovered, in a garret, an old sofa-cover, a small piece of rug, and some fragments of other articles, which added a little to our warmth. The poor child crept close to me for warmth, and for security against her ghostly enemies. When I was not more than usually ill, I took her into my arms, so that, in general, she was tolerably warm, and often slept when I could not; for, during the last two months of my sufferings, I slept much in the daytime, and was apt to fall into transient dozings at all hours. But my sleep distressed me more than my watching; for, besides the tumultuousness of my dreams (which were only not so awful as those which I shall have to describe hereafter as produced by opium) my sleep was never more than what is called *dog-sleep*; so that I could hear myself moaning, and was often, as it seemed to me, awakened suddenly by my own voice; and, about this time, a hideous sensation began to haunt me as soon as I fell into a slumber, which has since returned upon me, at different periods of my life, namely, a sort of twitching (I know not where, but apparently about the region of the stomach), which compelled me violently to throw out my feet for the sake of relieving it. This sensation coming on as soon as I began to sleep, and the effort to relieve it constantly awaking me, at length I slept only from exhaustion; and, from increasing weakness (as I said before), I was constantly falling asleep, and constantly awaking. Meantime, the master of the house sometimes came in upon us suddenly, and very early; sometimes not till ten o'clock; sometimes not at all. He was in constant fear of bailiffs; improving on the plan of Cromwell, every night he slept in a different quarter of London;<sup>2</sup> and I observed that he never failed to examine, through a

<sup>1</sup>This was a Mr. Brunell, or Brown, to whom De Quincey had been referred by a money-lender named Dell. As De Quincey explains in a later passage of the *Confessions*, "he was one of those anomalous practitioners in lower departments of the law, who—what shall I say?—who, on prudential reasons, or from necessity, deny themselves all indulgence in the luxury of too delicate a conscience."

<sup>2</sup>De Quincey had perhaps read in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, Bk. XV, the story that Cromwell became apprehensive of danger after the dissolution of his last Parliament, and "rarely lodged two nights together in one chamber, but had many furnished and prepared, to which his own key conveyed him."



private window, the appearance of those who knocked at the door, before he would allow it to be opened. He breakfasted alone; indeed, his tea equipage would hardly have admitted of his hazarding an invitation to a second person, any more than the quantity of esculent *matériel*,<sup>1</sup> which, for the most part, was little more than a roll, or a few biscuits, which he had bought on his road from the place where he had slept. Or, if he had asked a party, as I once learnedly and facetiously observed to him, the several members of it must have stood in the relation to each other (not sat in any relation whatever) of succession, as the metaphysicians have it, and not of coexistence; in the relation of the parts of time, and not of the parts of space. During his breakfast, I generally contrived a reason for lounging in; and, with an air of as much indifference as I could assume, took up such fragments as he had left,—sometimes, indeed, there were none at all. In doing this, I committed no robbery except upon the man himself, who was thus obliged (I believe), now and then, to send out at noon for an extra biscuit; for, as to the poor child, she was never admitted into his study (if I may give that name to his chief depository of parchments, law writings, *etc.*); that room was to her the Bluebeard room of the house, being regularly locked on his departure to dinner, about six o'clock, which usually was his final departure for the night. Whether this child was an illegitimate daughter of Mr. [Brunell], or only a servant, I could not ascertain; she did not herself know; but certainly she was treated altogether as a menial servant. No sooner did Mr. [Brunell] make his appearance, than she went below stairs, brushed his shoes, coat, *etc.*; and, except when she was summoned to run an errand, she never emerged from the dismal Tartarus of the kitchens, *etc.*, to the upper air, until my welcome knock at night called up her little trembling footsteps to the front door. Of her life during the daytime, however, I knew little but what I gathered from her own account at night; for, as soon as the hours of business commenced, I saw that my absence would be acceptable; and, in general, therefore, I went off and sat in the parks, or elsewhere, until night-fall.

### III

Whether desperate or not, however, the issue of the struggle in 1813 was what I have mentioned;<sup>2</sup> and from this date the reader is to consider me as a regular and confirmed opium-eater, of whom to ask whether on any particular day he had or had not taken opium, would be to ask whether his lungs had performed respiration, or the heart fulfilled its functions. You understand now, reader, what I am; and you are by this time aware, that no old gentleman, "with a snow-white beard," will have any chance of persuading me to surrender "the little golden receptacle of the pernicious drug."<sup>3</sup> No; I give notice to all, whether moralists or surgeons, that, whatever be their pretensions and skill in their respective lines of practice, they must not hope for any countenance from me, if they think to begin by any savage proposition for a Lent or Ramadan<sup>4</sup> of abstinence from opium. This, then, being all fully understood between us, we shall in future sail before the wind. Now, then, reader, from 1813, where all this time we have been sitting down and loitering, rise up, if you please, and walk forward about three years more. Now draw up the curtain, and you shall see me in a new character.

If any man, poor or rich, were to say that he would tell us what had been the happiest day in his life, and the why and the wherefore, I suppose that we should all cry out, Hear him! hear him! As to the happiest day, that must be very difficult for any wise man to name; because any event, that could occupy so distinguished a place in a man's retrospect of his life, or be entitled to have shed a special felicity on any one day, ought to be of such an enduring character as that (accidents apart) it should have continued

<sup>2</sup>The section from which this passage is taken is preceded by one entitled "The Pleasures of Opium." In it De Quincey tells how he began taking opium when he was at Oxford—though he made his first purchase of it from a druggist in London—in 1804. He then goes on to state that he had continued to take a small quantity once a week until 1813, but that in this year he had suffered from "a most appalling irritation of the stomach" from which he had been able to find no relief except in daily doses of opium, and that his subsequent efforts to break off the habit had been unavailing.

<sup>3</sup>A reference to a preceding note in which De Quincey warns his readers not to believe statements about the harmful effects of opium made by Thomas Hope in a novel entitled *Anastasius* (published in 1819).

<sup>4</sup>Ninth month of the Mahometan year, each day of which is observed as a fast from dawn until sunset.

<sup>1</sup>Edible substance.



to shed the same felicity, or one not distinguishably less, on many years together. To the happiest *lustrum*,<sup>1</sup> however, or even to the happiest year, it may be allowed to any man to point without discountenance from wisdom. This year, in my case, reader, was the one which we have now reached; though it stood, I confess, as a parenthesis between years of a gloomier character. It was a year of brilliant water (to speak after the manner of jewelers), set, as it were, and insulated, in the gloom and cloudy melancholy of opium. Strange as it may sound, I had a little before this time descended suddenly, and without any considerable effort, from three hundred and twenty grains of opium (that is, eight<sup>2</sup> thousand drops of laudanum) per day, to forty grains, or one-eighth part. Instantaneously, and as if by magic, the cloud of profoundest melancholy which rested upon my brain, like some black vapors that I have seen roll away from the summits of mountains, drew off in one day (*νυκθήμερον*<sup>3</sup>); passed off with its murky banners as simultaneously as a ship that has been stranded, and is floated off by a spring tide,—

That moveth altogether, if it move at all.<sup>4</sup>

Now, then, I was again happy: I now took only one thousand drops of laudanum per day—and what was that? A latter spring had come to close up the season of youth: my brain performed its functions as healthily as ever before. I read Kant<sup>5</sup> again, and again I understood him, or fancied that I did. Again my feelings of pleasure expanded themselves to all around me; and if any man

from Oxford or Cambridge, or from neither, had been announced to me in my unpretending cottage, I should have welcomed him with as sumptuous a reception as so poor a man could offer. Whatever else was wanting to a wise man's happiness, of laudanum I would have given him as much as he wished, and in a golden cup. And, by the way, now that I speak of giving laudanum away, I remember, about this time, a little incident, which I mention, because, trifling as it was, the reader will soon meet it again in my dreams, which it influenced more fearfully than could be imagined. One day a Malay knocked at my door. What business a Malay could have to transact amongst English mountains, I cannot conjecture; but possibly he was on his road to a seaport about forty miles distant.

The servant who opened the door to him was a young girl<sup>6</sup> born and bred amongst the mountains, who had never seen an Asiatic dress of any sort: his turban, therefore, confounded her not a little; and as it turned out that his attainments in English were exactly of the same extent as hers in the Malay there seemed to be an impassable gulf fixed between all communication of ideas, if either party had happened to possess any. In this dilemma, the girl, recollecting the reputed learning of her master (and, doubtless, giving me credit for a knowledge of all the languages of the earth, besides, perhaps, a few of the lunar ones), came and gave me to understand that there was a sort of demon below, whom she clearly imagined that my art could exorcise from the house. I did not immediately go down; but when I did, the group which presented itself, arranged as it was by accident, though not very elaborate, took hold of my fancy and my eye in a way that none of the statuesque attitudes exhibited in the ballets at the opera-house, though so ostentatiously complex, had ever done. In a cottage kitchen, but paneled on the wall with dark wood that from age and rubbing resembled oak, and looking more like a rustic hall of entrance than a kitchen, stood the Malay, his turban and loose trousers of dingy white relieved upon the dark paneling; he had placed himself nearer to the girl than she seemed to relish, though her native

<sup>1</sup>Period of five years.

<sup>2</sup>I here reckon twenty-five drops of laudanum as equivalent to one grain of opium, which, I believe, is the common estimate. However, as both may be considered variable quantities (the crude opium varying much in strength, and the tincture still more), I suppose that no infinitesimal accuracy can be had in such a calculation. Tea-spoons vary as much in size as opium in strength. Small ones hold about one hundred drops: so that eight thousand drops are about eighty times a tea-spoonful. The reader sees how much I kept within Doctor Buchan's indulgent allowance. (De Quincey's note. The allusion is to a pirated edition of Buchan's *Domestic Medicine* which De Quincey had seen, in which "the Doctor was made to say—"Be particularly careful never to take above 25 ounces of laudanum at once"; the true reading being probably 25 drops, which are held equal to about one grain of crude opium.")

<sup>3</sup>A night and a day.

<sup>4</sup>Wordsworth's *Resolution and Independence*.

<sup>5</sup>Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the difficulty of whose writings has become proverbial.

<sup>6</sup>She was Barbara Lewthwaite, named in Wordsworth's *The Pet Lamb*.

spirit of mountain intrepidity contended with the feeling of simple awe which her countenance expressed, as she gazed upon the tiger-cat before her. And a more striking picture there could not be imagined than the beautiful English face of the girl, and its exquisite fairness, together with her erect and independent attitude, contrasted with the sallow and bilious skin of the Malay, enameled or veneered with mahogany by marine air, his small, fierce, restless eyes, thin lips, slavish gestures, and adorations. Half hidden by the ferocious-looking Malay was a little child from a neighboring cottage, who had crept in after him, and was now in the act of reverting its head and gazing upwards at the turban and the fiery eyes beneath it, whilst with one hand he caught at the dress of the young woman for protection.

My knowledge of the oriental tongues is not remarkably extensive, being, indeed, confined to two words,—the Arabic word for barley, and the Turkish for opium (madjoon), which I have learned from *Anastasius*. And, as I had neither a Malay dictionary, nor even Adelung's *Mithridates*,<sup>1</sup> which might have helped me to a few words, I addressed him in some lines from the *Iliad*, considering that, of such languages as I possessed, Greek, in point of longitude, came geographically nearest to an oriental one. He worshiped me in a most devout manner, and replied in what I suppose was Malay. In this way I saved my reputation with my neighbors, for the Malay had no means of betraying the secret. He lay down upon the floor for about an hour, and then pursued his journey. On his departure, I presented him with a piece of opium. To him, as an orientalist, I concluded that opium must be familiar; and the expression of his face convinced me that it was. Nevertheless, I was struck with some little consternation when I saw him suddenly raise his hand to his mouth, and (in the school-boy phrase) bolt the whole, divided into three pieces, at one mouthful. The quantity was enough to kill three dragoons and their horses, and I felt some alarm for the poor creature; but what could be done? I had given him the opium in compassion for his solitary life, on recol-

lecting that, if he had traveled on foot from London, it must be nearly three weeks since he could have exchanged a thought with any human being. I could not think of violating the laws of hospitality by having him seized and drenched with an emetic, and thus frightening him into a notion that we were going to sacrifice him to some English idol. No; there was clearly no help for it. He took his leave, and for some days I felt anxious; but, as I never heard of any Malay being found dead, I became convinced that he was used<sup>2</sup> to opium, and that I must have done him the service I designed, by giving him one night of respite from the pains of wandering.

This incident I have digressed to mention, because this Malay (partly from the picturesque exhibition he assisted to frame, partly from the anxiety I connected with his image for some days) fastened afterwards upon my dreams, and brought other Malays with him worse than himself, that ran "a-muck"<sup>3</sup> at me, and led me into a world of troubles.—But to quit this episode, and to return to my intercalary<sup>4</sup> year of happiness. I have said already, that on a subject so important to us all as happiness, we should listen with pleasure to any man's experience or experiments, even though he were but a plowboy, who cannot be supposed to have plowed very deep in such an intractable soil as that of human pains and pleasures, or to have conducted his researches upon any very enlightened principles. But I, who have taken happiness, both in a solid and a liquid shape, both boiled and unboiled, both East India and Turkey—who have conducted my experiments upon this interesting subject with a sort of galvanic battery—and have, for the general benefit of the world,

<sup>2</sup>This, however, is not a necessary conclusion; the varieties of effect produced by opium on different constitutions are infinite. A London magistrate (Harriott's *Struggles through Life*, vol. iii, p. 301, third edition) has recorded that on the first occasion of his trying laudanum for the gout, he took forty drops; the next night sixty, and on the fifth night eighty, without any effect whatever; and this at an advanced age. I have an anecdote from a country surgeon, however, which sinks Mr. Harriott's case into a trifle; and, in my projected medical treatise on opium, which I will publish, provided the College of Surgeons will pay me for enlightening their benighted understandings upon this subject, I will relate it; but it is far too good a story to be published gratis (De Quincey's note).

<sup>3</sup>See the common accounts, in any Eastern traveler or voyager, of the frantic excesses committed by Malays who have taken opium, or are reduced to desperation by ill luck at gambling (De Quincey's note).

<sup>4</sup>Interpolated.

<sup>1</sup>A work on oriental languages named from the king of Pontus who, according to tradition, could speak the 22 dialects of his kingdom. The author was J. C. Adelung (1732-1806), a German philologist.

inoculated myself, as it were, with the poison of eight thousand drops of laudanum per day (just for the same reason as a French surgeon inoculated himself lately with cancer—an English one, twenty years ago, with plague—and a third, I know not of what nation<sup>1</sup>, with hydrophobia), I, it will be admitted, must surely know what happiness is, if anybody does. And therefore I will here lay down an analysis of happiness; and, as the most interesting mode of communicating it, I will give it, not didactically, but wrapped up and involved in a picture of one evening, as I spent every evening during the intercalary year when laudanum, though taken daily, was to me no more than the elixir of pleasure. This done, I shall quit the subject of happiness altogether, and pass to a very different one—the *pains of opium*.

Let there be a cottage, standing in a valley, eighteen miles from any town;<sup>2</sup> no spacious valley, but about two miles long by three-quarters of a mile in average width—the benefit of which provision is, that all the families resident within its circuit will compose, as it were, one larger household, personally familiar to your eye, and more or less interesting to your affections. Let the mountains be real mountains, between three and four thousand feet high, and the cottage a real cottage, not (as a witty author has it) “a cottage with a double coach-house”;

<sup>1</sup>He also was English—a surgeon of Brighton—as De Quincey states in the edition of 1856.

<sup>2</sup>The cottage and the valley concerned in this description were not imaginary: the valley was the lovely one, in those days, of Grasmere; and the cottage was occupied for more than twenty years by myself, as immediate successor, in the year 1809, to Wordsworth. Looking to the limitation here laid down—viz., in those days—the reader will inquire in what way *Time* can have affected the beauty of Grasmere. Do the Westmoreland valleys turn gray-headed? O reader! this is a painful memento for some of us! Thirty years ago, a gang of Vandals (nameless, I thank heaven, to me), for the sake of building a mail-coach road that never would be wanted, carried, at a cost of £3000 to the defrauded parish, a horrid causeway of sheer granite masonry, for three-quarters of a mile, right through the loveliest succession of secret forest dells and sly recesses of the lake, margined by unripped ferns, amongst which was the *Osmunda regalis*. This sequestered angle of Grasmere is described by Wordsworth, as it unveiled itself on a September morning, in the exquisite poems on the “Naming of Places.” From this also—viz., this spot of ground, and this magnificent crest (the *Osmunda*)—was suggested that unique line, the finest independent line through all the records of verse,

“Or lady of the lake,

Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.”

Rightly, therefore, did I introduce this limitation. The Grasmere before and after this outrage were two different vales. (De Quincey’s note in the edition of 1856. The poem quoted from is IV in the *Poems on the Naming of Places*.)

<sup>3</sup>Coleridge, in *The Devil’s Thoughts*

let it be, in fact (for I must abide by the actual scene), a white cottage, embowered with flowering shrubs, so chosen as to unfold a succession of flowers upon the walls, and clustering around the windows, through all the months of spring, summer, and autumn—beginning, in fact, with May roses, and ending with jasmine. Let it, however, *not* be spring, nor summer, nor autumn—but winter, in his sternest shape. This is a most important point in the science of happiness. And I am surprised to see people overlook it, and think it matter of congratulation that winter is going, or, if coming, is not likely to be a severe one. On the contrary, I put up a petition annually for as much snow, hail, frost, or storm of one kind or other as the skies can possibly afford us. Surely everybody is aware of the divine pleasures which attend a winter fireside—candles at four o’clock, warm hearth-rugs, tea, a fair tea-maker, shutters closed, curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor, whilst the wind and rain are raging audibly without,

And at the doors and windows seem to call,  
As heaven and earth they would together mell;  
Yet the least entrance find they none at all;  
Whence sweeter grows our rest secure in massy hall.

*Castle of Indolence.*<sup>4</sup>

All these are items in the description of a winter evening which must surely be familiar to everybody born in a high latitude. And it is evident that most of these delicacies, like ice-cream, require a very low temperature of the atmosphere to produce them: they are fruits which cannot be ripened without weather stormy or inclement, in some way or other. I am not “*particular*,” as people say, whether it be snow, or black frost, or wind so strong that (as Mr. [Anti-Slavery Clarkson] says) “you may lean your back against it like a post.” I can put up even with rain, provided that it rains cats and dogs; but something of the sort I must have; and, if I have it not, I think myself in a manner ill used: for why am I called on to pay so heavily for winter, in coals, and candles, and various privations that will occur even to gentlemen, if I am not to have the article good of its kind? No: a Canadian winter

<sup>4</sup>By Thomson. Canto I, stanza 43, quoted inexactly.



for my money: or a Russian one, where every man is but a co-proprietor with the north wind in the fee-simple<sup>1</sup> of his own ears. Indeed, so great an epicure am I in this matter, that I cannot relish a winter night fully, if it be much past St. Thomas's day<sup>2</sup>, and have degenerated into disgusting tendencies to vernal appearances;—no, it must be divided by a thick wall of dark nights from all return of light and sunshine. From the latter 10 weeks of October to Christmas-eve, therefore, is the period during which happiness is in season, which, in my judgment, enters the room with the tea-tray; for tea, though ridiculed by those who are naturally of coarse 15 nerves, or are become so from wine-drinking, and are not susceptible of influence from so refined a stimulant, will always be the favorite beverage of the intellectual; and, for my part, I would have joined Dr. Johnson in a *bellum internecinum*<sup>3</sup> against Jonas Hanway, or any other impious person who should presume to disparage it. But here, to save myself the trouble of too much verbal description, I will introduce a painter, and 25 give him directions for the rest of the picture. Painters do not like white cottages, unless a good deal weather-stained, but, as the reader now understands that it is a winter night, his services will not be required except 30 for the inside of the house.

Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high. This, reader, is somewhat ambitiously styled, in my family, the drawing- 35 room; but being contrived "a double debt to pay,"<sup>4</sup> it is also, and more justly, termed the library, for it happens that books are the only article of property in which I am richer than my neighbors. Of these I have about 40 five thousand, collected gradually since my eighteenth year. Therefore, painter, put as many as you can into this room. Make it populous with books; and, furthermore, paint me a good fire, and furniture plain 45 and modest, befitting the unpretending cottage of a scholar. And near the fire

paint me a tea-table; and (as it is clear that no creature can come to see one, such a stormy night) place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray; and, if you know how to paint 5 such a thing symbolically, or otherwise, paint me an eternal tea-pot—eternal *à parte ante* and *à parte post*<sup>5</sup>; for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four o'clock in the morning. And, as it is very unpleasant to 10 make tea, or to pour it out for one's self, paint me a lovely young woman, sitting at the table. Paint her arms like Aurora's, and her smiles like Hebe's;—but no, dear M[argaret],<sup>6</sup> not even in jest let me insinuate that thy power to illuminate my cottage rests upon a 15 tenure so perishable as mere personal beauty; or that the witchcraft of angelic smiles lies within the empire of any earthly pencil. Pass, then, my good painter, to something more 20 within its power; and the next article brought forward should naturally be myself—a picture of the Opium-eater, with his "little golden receptacle of the pernicious drug" lying beside him on the table. As to the opium, I have no 25 objection to see a picture of *that*, though I would rather see the original; you may paint it, if you choose; but I apprise you that no "little" receptacle would, even in 1816, answer my purpose, who was at a distance from the 30 "stately Pantheon,"<sup>7</sup> and all druggists (mortal or otherwise). No: you may as well paint the real receptacle, which was not of gold, but of glass, and as much like a wine-decanter as possible. Into this you may 35 put a quart of ruby-colored laudanum; that, and a book of German metaphysics placed by its side, will sufficiently attest my being in the neighborhood; but as to myself, there I demur. I admit that, naturally, I ought to 40 occupy the foreground of the picture; that being the hero of the piece, or (if you choose) the criminal at the bar, my body should be had into court. This seems reasonable; but why should I confess, on this point, to a 45 painter? or why confess at all? If the public (into whose private ear I am confidentially whispering my confessions, and not into any painter's) should chance to have framed some agreeable picture for itself of the Opium-

<sup>1</sup>I. e., absolute ownership.

<sup>2</sup>1 December.

<sup>3</sup>War to the death. Hanway, said to have been "the first man who ventured to walk the streets of London with an umbrella over his head," wrote an *Essay on Tea* (1756) which Dr. Johnson attacked in a review. Hanway angrily replied, and Dr. Johnson persisted in his defense of tea in a reply to the reply.

<sup>4</sup>Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*, l. 229.

<sup>5</sup>From the times before and from the times to come.

<sup>6</sup>De Quincey's wife.

<sup>7</sup>A London concert hall, called stately by Wordsworth, near which was the druggist's shop in which De Quincey first purchased opium in 1804.

eater's exterior—should have ascribed to him, romantically, an elegant person, or a handsome face, why should I barbarously tear from it so pleasing a delusion—pleasing both to the public and to me? No: paint me, if at all, according to your own fancy; and, as a painter's fancy should teem with beautiful creations, I cannot fail, in that way, to be a gainer. And now, reader, we have run through all the ten categories of my condition, as it stood about 1816–1817, up to the middle of which latter year I judge myself to have been a happy man; and the elements of that happiness I have endeavored to place before you, in the above sketch of the interior of a scholar's library, in a cottage among the mountains, on a stormy winter evening.

But now farewell, a long farewell, to happiness, winter or summer! farewell to smiles and laughter! farewell to peace of mind! farewell to hope, and to tranquil dreams, and to the blessed consolations of sleep! For more than three years and a half I am summoned away from these, I am now arrived at an *Iliad* of woes!<sup>1</sup> for I have now to record

#### THE PAINS OF OPIUM.

#### IV

I now pass<sup>2</sup> to what is the main subject of these latter confessions, to the history and journal of what took place in my dreams; for these were the immediate and proximate cause of my acutest suffering.

The first notice I had of any important change going on in this part of my physical economy, was from the reawakening of a state of eye generally incident to childhood, or exalted states of irritability. I know not whether my reader is aware that many children, perhaps most, have a power of painting, as it were, upon the darkness, all sorts of phantoms: in some that power is simply a mechanic affection of the eye; others have a voluntary or a semi-voluntary power to dismiss or to summon them; or, as a child once said to me when I questioned him on this matter, "I can tell them to go, and they go; but sometimes they come when I don't tell them to come." Whereupon I told him

that he had almost as unlimited a command over apparitions as a Roman centurion over his soldiers.—In the middle of 1817, I think it was, that this faculty became positively distressing to me: at night, when I lay awake in bed, vast processions passed along in mournful pomp; friezes of never-ending stories, that to my feelings were as sad and solemn as if they were stories drawn from times before *Ædipus* or *Priam*, before *Tyre*, before *Memphis*. And, at the same time, a corresponding change took place in my dreams; a theater seemed suddenly opened and lighted up within my brain, which presented, nightly, spectacles of more than earthly splendor. And the four following facts may be mentioned, as noticeable at this time:

1. That, as the creative state of the eye increased, a sympathy seemed to arise between the waking and the dreaming states of the brain in one point—that whatsoever I happened to call up and to trace by a voluntary act upon the darkness was very apt to transfer itself to my dreams; so that I feared to exercise this faculty; for, as *Midas* turned all things to gold, that yet baffled his hopes and defrauded his human desires, so whatsoever things capable of being visually represented I did but think of in the darkness, immediately shaped themselves into phantoms of the eye; and, by a process apparently no less inevitable, when thus once traced in faint and visionary colors, like writings in sympathetic ink, they were drawn out, by the fierce chemistry of my dreams, into insufferable splendor that fretted my heart.

2. For this, and all other changes in my dreams, were accompanied by deep-seated anxiety and gloomy melancholy, such as are wholly incommunicable by words. I seemed every night to descend—not metaphorically, but literally to descend—into chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that I could ever reascend. Nor did I, by waking, feel that I had reascended. This I do not dwell upon; because the state of gloom which attended these gorgeous spectacles, amounting at least to utter darkness, as of some suicidal despondency, cannot be approached by words.

3. The sense of space, and in the end the sense of time, were both powerfully affected. Buildings, landscapes, *etc.* were exhibited in

<sup>1</sup>The allusion is to the opening lines of the *Iliad*.

<sup>2</sup>After statements showing the intellectual torpor to which the excessive use of opium reduced him.

proportions so vast as the bodily eye is not fitted to receive. Space swelled, and was amplified to an extent of unutterable infinity. This, however, did not disturb me so much as the vast expansion of time. I sometimes seemed to have lived for seventy or one hundred years in one night; nay, sometimes had feelings representative of a millennium, passed in that time, or, however, of a duration far beyond the limits of any human experience.

4. The minutest incidents of childhood, or forgotten scenes of later years, were often revived. I could not be said to recollect them; for if I had been told of them when waking, I should not have been able to acknowledge them as parts of my past experience. But placed as they were before me, in dreams like intuitions, and clothed in all their evanescent circumstances and accompanying feelings, I *recognized* them instantaneously. I was once told by a near relative of mine,<sup>1</sup> that having in her childhood fallen into a river, and being on the very verge of death but for the critical assistance which reached her, she saw in a moment her whole life, in its minutest incidents, arrayed before her simultaneously as in a mirror; and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part. This, from some opium experiences of mine, I can believe; I have, indeed, seen the same thing asserted twice in modern books, and accompanied by a remark which I am convinced is true, namely, that the dread book of account which the Scriptures speak of<sup>2</sup> is, in fact, the mind itself of each individual. Of this, at least, I feel assured, that there is no such thing as *forgetting* possible to the mind; a thousand accidents may and will interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the mind; accidents of the same sort will also rend away this veil; but alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains for ever; just as the stars seem to withdraw before the common light of day, whereas, in fact, we all know that it is the light which is drawn over them as a veil, and that they are waiting to be revealed, when the obscuring daylight shall have withdrawn.

Having noticed these four facts as memorably distinguishing my dreams from those of health, I shall now cite a case illustrative of the first fact; and shall then cite any others that I remember, either in their chronological order, or any other that may give them more effect as pictures to the reader.

I had been in youth, and even since, for occasional amusement, a great reader of Livy, whom I confess that I prefer, both for style and matter, to any other of the Roman historians; and I had often felt as most solemn and appalling sounds, and most emphatically representative of the majesty of the Roman people, the two words so often occurring in Livy—*Consul Romanus*; especially when the consul is introduced in his military character. I mean to say, that the words king, sultan, regent, *etc.*, or any other titles of those who embody in their own persons the collective majesty of a great people, had less power over my reverential feelings. I had also, though no great reader of history, made myself minutely and critically familiar with one period of English history, namely, the period of the Parliamentary War, having been attracted by the moral grandeur of some who figured in that day, and by the many interesting memoirs which survive those unquiet times. Both these parts of my lighter reading, having furnished me often with matter of reflection, now furnished me with matter for my dreams. Often I used to see, after painting upon the blank darkness a sort of rehearsal whilst waking, a crowd of ladies, and perhaps a festival, and dances. And I heard it said, or I said to myself, "These are English ladies from the unhappy times of Charles I. These are the wives and the daughters of those who met in peace, and sat at the same tables, and were allied by marriage or by blood; and yet, after a certain day in August, 1642,<sup>3</sup> never smiled upon each other again, nor met but in the field of battle; and at Marston Moor, at Newbury, or at Naseby, cut asunder all ties of love by the cruel saber, and washed away in blood the memory of ancient friendship." The ladies danced, and looked as lovely as the court of George IV. Yet I knew, even in my dream, that they had been in the grave

<sup>1</sup>It is said that the relative was De Quincey's mother.

<sup>2</sup>*Cf.* Revelation, xx, 12.

<sup>3</sup>Charles I's standard, which gave the signal for the actual beginning of the English Civil War, was raised at Nottingham on 22 August, 1642.



for nearly two centuries. This pageant would suddenly dissolve; and, at a clapping of hands, would be heard the heart-quaking sound of *Consul Romanus*; and immediately came "sweeping by," in gorgeous paludaments,<sup>1</sup> Paulus, or Marius<sup>2</sup> girt round by a company of centurions, with the crimson tunic<sup>3</sup> hoisted on a spear, and followed by the *alalagmos*<sup>4</sup> of the Roman legions.

Many years ago, when I was looking over 10 Piranesi's<sup>5</sup> *Antiquities of Rome*, Mr. Coleridge, who was standing by, described to me a set of plates by that artist, called his *Dreams*, and which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever: 15 some of them (I describe only from memory of Mr. Coleridge's account) representing vast Gothic halls; on the floor of which stood all sorts of engines and machinery, wheels, cables, pulleys, levers, catapults, *etc.*, *etc.*, 20 expressive of enormous power put forth, and resistance overcome. Creeping along the sides of the walls, you perceived a staircase; and upon it, groping his way upwards, was Piranesi himself. Follow the stairs a little 25 further, and you perceive it come to a sudden, abrupt termination, without any balustrade, and allowing no step onwards to him who had reached the extremity, except into the depths below. Whatever is to 30 become of poor Piranesi, you suppose, at least, that his labors must in some way terminate here. But raise your eyes, and behold a second flight of stairs still higher; on which again Piranesi is perceived, but this 35 time standing on the very brink of the abyss. Again elevate your eye, and a still more aerial flight of stairs is beheld; and again is poor Piranesi busy on his aspiring labors; and so on, until the unfinished stairs and 40 Piranesi both are lost in the upper gloom of the hall. With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams. In the early

stage of my malady, the splendors of my dreams were indeed chiefly architectural; and I beheld such pomp of cities and palaces as was never yet beheld by the waking eye, unless in the clouds. From a great modern poet I cite part of a passage which describes, as an appearance actually beheld in the clouds, what in many of its circumstances I saw frequently in sleep:

The appearance, instantaneously disclosed  
Was of a mighty city—boldly say  
A wilderness of building, sinking far  
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,  
Far sinking into splendor—without end!  
Fabric it seemed of diamond, and of gold,  
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,  
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,  
In avenues disposed; there towers begirt  
With battlements that on their restless fronts  
Bore stars—illumination of all gems!  
By earthly nature had the effect been wrought  
Upon the dark materials of the storm  
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves,  
And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto  
The vapors had receded—taking there  
Their station under a cerulean sky, *etc.*<sup>6</sup>

The sublime circumstance—"battlements that on their *restless* fronts bore stars"—might have been copied from my architectural dreams, for it often occurred. We hear it reported of Dryden, and of Fuseli<sup>7</sup> in modern times, that they thought proper to eat raw meat for the sake of obtaining splendid dreams: how much better, for such a purpose, to have eaten opium, which yet I do not remember that any poet is recorded to have done, except the dramatist Shadwell,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Bk. II, ll. 834-851. De Quincey explains, in the edition of 1856, why he did not in the first instance name Wordsworth: "The year in which I wrote and published these *Confessions* was 1821; and at that time the name of Wordsworth, though beginning to emerge from the dark cloud of scorn and contumely which had hitherto overshadowed it, was yet most imperfectly established. Not until ten years later was his greatness cheerfully and generally acknowledged. I, therefore, as the very earliest (without one exception) of all who came forward, in the beginning of his career, to honor and welcome him, shrank with disgust from making any sentence of mine the occasion for an explosion of vulgar malice against him. But the grandeur of the passage here cited inevitably spoke for itself; and he that would have been most scornful on hearing the name of the poet coupled with this epithet of 'great' could not but find his malice intercepted, and himself cheated into cordial admiration, by the splendor of the verses."

<sup>7</sup>John Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), an artist of Swiss extraction who passed most of his life in England.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Shadwell (1640-1692), Dryden's Mac Flecknoe.

<sup>1</sup>Military cloaks, worn by generals and their principal officers.

<sup>2</sup>Lucius Æmilius Paulus (died 160 B. C.), and Caius Marius (died 86 B. C.).

<sup>3</sup>The signal which announced a day of battle (De Quincey's note, edition of 1856).

<sup>4</sup>A word expressing collectively the gathering of the Roman war-cries—*Alála, Alála* (De Quincey's note, edition of 1856). Greek ἀλαλή means war-cry.

<sup>5</sup>Italian engraver (died 1778). Piranesi never published a set of plates entitled *Dreams*, though some of his engravings depict imaginary edifices.

and in ancient days, Homer is, I think, rightly reputed to have known the virtues of opium.<sup>1</sup>

To my architecture succeeded dreams of lakes and silvery expanses of water: these haunted me so much, that I feared (though possibly it will appear ludicrous to a medical man) that some dropsical state or tendency of the brain might thus be making itself (to use a metaphysical word) *objective*,<sup>2</sup> and the sentient organ *project* itself as its own object. For two months I suffered greatly in my head—a part of my bodily structure which had hitherto been so clear from all touch or taint of weakness (physically, I mean) that I used to say of it, as the last Lord Orford<sup>3</sup> said of his stomach, that it seemed likely to survive the rest of my person. Till now I had never felt headache even, or any the slightest pain, except rheumatic pains caused by my own folly. However, I got over this attack, though it must have been verging on something very dangerous.

The waters now changed their character—from translucent lakes, shining like mirrors, they now became seas and oceans. And now came a tremendous change, which, unfolding itself slowly like a scroll, through many months, promised an abiding torment; and, in fact, never left me until the winding up of my case. Hitherto the human face had mixed often in my dreams, but not despotically, nor with any special power of tormenting. But now that which I have called the tyranny of the human face began to unfold itself. Perhaps some part of my London life might be answerable for this. Be that as it may, now it was that upon the rocking waters of the ocean the human face began to appear; the sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens; faces, imploring, wrathful, despairing, surged upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations, by centuries: my agitation was infinite, my mind tossed, and surged with the ocean.

<sup>1</sup>The opinion is based on a passage in the *Odyssey*, Bk. IV, where Helen is represented as giving Telemachus a potion which made him oblivious of his sorrows.

<sup>2</sup>This word, so nearly unintelligible in 1821, so intensely scholastic, and, consequently, when surrounded by familiar and vernacular words, so apparently pedantic, yet, on the other hand, so indispensable to accurate thinking, and to wide thinking, has since 1821 become too common to need any apology (De Quincey's note, edition of 1856).

<sup>3</sup>Horace Walpole (1717-1797).

May, 1818.—The Malay had been a fearful enemy for months. I have been every night, through his means, transported into Asiatic scenes. I know not whether others share in my feelings on this point; but I have often thought that if I were compelled to forgo England, and to live in China, and among Chinese manners and modes of life and scenery, I should go mad. The causes of my horror lie deep, and some of them must be common to others. Southern Asia, in general, is the seat of awful images and associations. As the cradle of the human race, it would alone have a dim and reverential feeling connected with it. But there are other reasons. No man can pretend that the wild, barbarous, and capricious superstitions of Africa, or of savage tribes elsewhere, affect him in the way that he is affected by the ancient, monumental, cruel, and elaborate religions of Indostan, *etc.* The mere antiquity of Asiatic things, of their institutions, histories, modes of faith, *etc.*, is so impressive, that to me the vast age of the race and name overpowers the sense of youth in the individual. A young Chinese seems to me an antediluvian man renewed. Even Englishmen, though not bred in any knowledge of such institutions, cannot but shudder at the mystic sublimity of *castes* that have flowed apart, and refused to mix, through such immemorial tracts of time; nor can any man fail to be awed by the names of the Ganges, or the Euphrates. It contributes much to these feelings that Southern Asia is, and has been for thousands of years, the part of the earth most swarming with human life, the great *officina gentium*.<sup>4</sup> Man is a weed in those regions. The vast empires, also, into which the enormous population of Asia has always been cast, give a further sublimity to the feelings associated with all oriental names or images. In China, over and above what it has in common with the rest of Southern Asia, I am terrified by the modes of life, by the manners, and the barrier of utter abhorrence, and want of sympathy, placed between us by feelings deeper than I can analyze. I could sooner live with lunatics, or brute animals. All this, and much more than I can say, or have time to say, the reader must enter into, be-

<sup>4</sup>Workshop of races.

fore he can comprehend the unimaginable horror which these dreams of oriental imagery, and mythological tortures, impressed upon me. Under the connecting feeling of tropical heat and vertical sunlights, I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearances, that are found in all tropical regions, and assembled them together in China or Indostan. From kindred feelings, I soon brought Egypt and all her gods under the same law. I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at, by monkeys, by paroquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas, and was fixed, for centuries, at the summit, or in secret rooms: I was the idol; I was the priest; I was worshiped; I was sacrificed. I fled from the wrath of Brama<sup>1</sup> through all the forests of Asia: Vishnu hated me; Seeva laid wait for me. I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris;<sup>2</sup> I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and the crocodile<sup>3</sup> trembled at. I was buried for a thousand years in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by crocodiles; and laid, confounded with all unutterable slimy things, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud.<sup>4</sup>

I thus give the reader some slight abstraction of my oriental dreams, which always filled me with such amazement at the monstrous scenery, that horror seemed absorbed, for a while, in sheer astonishment. Sooner or later came a reflux of feeling that swallowed up the astonishment, and left me, not so much in terror, as in hatred and abomination of what I saw. Over every form, and threat, and punishment, and dim sightless incarceration, brooded a sense of eternity and infinity that drove me into an oppression as of madness. Into these dreams only, it was, with one or two slight exceptions, that any circumstances of physical horror entered. All before had been moral and spiritual terrors. But here the main agents were ugly birds, or snakes, or crocodiles, especially the last. The cursed crocodile became to me the object of more

horror than almost all the rest. I was compelled to live with him; and (as was always the case, almost, in my dreams) for centuries. I escaped sometimes, and found myself in Chinese houses with cane tables, *etc.* All the feet of the tables, sofas, *etc.*, soon became instinct with life: the abominable head of the crocodile, and his leering eyes, looked out at me, multiplied into a thousand repetitions; and I stood loathing and fascinated. And so often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams, that many times the very same dream was broken up in the very same way: I heard gentle voices speaking to me (I hear everything when I am sleeping), and instantly I awoke: it was broad noon, and my children were standing, hand in hand, at my bedside; come to show me their colored shoes, or new frocks, or to let me see them dressed for going out. I protest that so awful was the transition from the damned crocodile, and the other unutterable monsters and abortions of my dreams, to the sight of innocent *human* natures and of infancy, that, in the mighty and sudden revulsion of mind, I wept, and could not forbear it, as I kissed their faces.

## V

As a final specimen, I cite one of a different character, from 1820.

The dream commenced with a music which now I often heard in dreams—a music of preparation and of awakening suspense; a music like the opening of the Coronation Anthem, and which, like *that*, gave the feeling of a vast march, of infinite cavalcades filing off, and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day—a day of crisis and of final hope for human nature, then suffering some mysterious eclipse, and laboring in some dread extremity. Somewhere, I knew not where—somehow, I knew not how—by some beings, I knew not whom—a battle, a strife, an agony, was conducting—was evolving like a great drama, or piece of music; with which my sympathy was the more insupportable from my confusion as to its place, its cause, its nature, and its possible issue. I, as is usual in dreams (where, of necessity, we make ourselves central to every movement), had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I had the power, if I could raise

<sup>1</sup>Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva compose the Trinity of the Hindu religion of Brahmanism.

<sup>2</sup>Female and male deities, sister and brother, in Egyptian mythology.

<sup>3</sup>Both sacred animals to the Egyptians

[ <sup>4</sup>*I. e.*, mud of the Nile.



myself, to will it; and yet again had not the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpressible guilt. "Deeper than ever plummet sounded,"<sup>1</sup> I lay inactive. Then, like a chorus, the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake; some mightier cause than ever yet the sword had pleaded, or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms; hurrys to and fro; trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights; tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me, and but a moment allowed—and clasped hands, and heart-breaking partings, and then—everlasting farewells! and, with a sigh, such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of death,<sup>2</sup> the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells!

And I awoke in struggles, and cried aloud—"I will sleep no more!"

## SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS

BEING A SEQUEL TO "THE CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER"<sup>3</sup>

### LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

OFTENTIMES at Oxford I saw Levana in my dreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pretend to have leisure for very much scholarship, you will not be angry with me for telling you. Levana was the Roman goddess that performed for the new-born infant the earliest office of ennobling kindness—typical, by its mode, of that grandeur which belongs to man everywhere, and of that benignity in powers invisible which even in pagan worlds sometimes descends to sustain it. At the very moment of birth, just as the infant tasted for the first time the atmosphere of our troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. *That* might bear different

interpretations. But immediately, lest so grand a creature should grovel there for more than one instant, either the paternal hand, as proxy for the goddess Levana, or some near kinsman, as proxy for the father, raised it upright, bade it look erect as the king of all this world, and presented its forehead to the stars, saying, perhaps, in his heart, "Behold what is greater than yourselves!" This symbolic act represented the function of Levana. And that mysterious lady, who never revealed her face (except to me in dreams), but always acted by delegation, had her name from the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian verb) *levare*, to raise aloft.

This is the explanation of Levana. And hence it has arisen that some people have understood by Levana the tutelary power that controls the education of the nursery. She, that would not suffer at his birth even a prefigurative or mimic degradation for her awful ward, far less could be supposed to suffer the real degradation attaching to the non-development of his powers. She therefore watches over human education. Now, the word *educō*, with the penultimate short, was derived (by a process often exemplified in the crystallization of languages) from the word *edūco*, with the penultimate long. Whatsoever *educes*, or develops, *educates*. By the education of Levana, therefore, is meant—not the poor machinery that moves by spelling-books and grammars, but that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passion, by strife, by temptation, by the energies of resistance, works for ever upon children—resting not day or night, any more than the mighty wheel of day and night themselves, whose moments, like restless spokes, are glimmering<sup>4</sup> for ever as they revolve.

<sup>4</sup>As I have never allowed myself to covet any man's ox nor his ass, nor anything that is his, still less would it become a philosopher to covet other people's images or metaphors. Here, therefore, I restore to Mr. Wordsworth this fine image of the revolving wheel and the glimmering spokes, as applied by him to the flying successions of day and night. I borrowed it for one moment in order to point my own sentence; which being done, the reader is witness that I now pay it back instantly by a note made for that sole purpose. On the same principle I often borrow their seals from young ladies, when closing my letters, because there is sure to be some tender sentiment upon them about "memory," or "hope," or "roses," or "reunion," and my correspondent must be a sad brute who is not touched by the eloquence of the seal, even if his taste is so bad that he remains deaf to mine (De Quincey's note).

<sup>1</sup>*Cf. The Tempest*, V, i, 56.

<sup>2</sup>*Cf. Paradise Lost*, Bk. II, l. 746 and following lines.

<sup>3</sup>The title means breathings, or sighs, from the depths. *Levana* was first published in the June, 1845, issue of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

If, then, *these* are the ministries by which Levana works, how profoundly must she reverence the agencies of grief! But you, reader, think that children generally are not liable to grief such as mine. There are two senses in the word *generally*—the sense of Euclid, where it means *universally* (or in the whole extent of the *genus*), and a foolish sense of this word, where it means *usually*. Now, I am far from saying that children universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *foundation*<sup>1</sup> should be there twelve years: he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief, but *that* it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs.

Therefore it is that Levana often communes with the powers that shake man's heart; therefore it is that she dotes upon grief. "These ladies," said I softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, "these are the Sorrows, and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the *Parcæ*<sup>2</sup> are three, who weave the dark arras<sup>3</sup> of man's life in their mysterious loom always with colors sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called from the other side of the grave offenses that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say *now*; but in Oxford I said, "one of whom I know, and the others too surely I *shall* know." For already, in my fervent youth, I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark background of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful Sisters.

These Sisters—by what name shall we call

them? If I say simply, "The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be understood of individual sorrow—separate cases of sorrow—whereas I want a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart, and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersonations—that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them, therefore, *Our Ladies of Sorrow*.

I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household; and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. Them I saw often conversing with Levana, and sometimes about myself. Do they talk, then? O no! Mighty phantoms like these disdain the infirmities of language. They may utter voices through the organs of man when they dwell in human hearts, but amongst themselves is no voice nor sound; eternal silence reigns in *their* kingdoms. They spoke not as they talked with Levana; they whispered not; they sang not; though oftentimes methought they *might* have sung: for I upon earth had heard their mysteries oftentimes deciphered by harp and timbrel, by dulcimer and organ. Like God, whose servants they are, they utter their pleasure not by sounds that perish, or by words that go astray, but by signs in heaven, by changes on earth, by pulses in secret rivers, heraldries painted on darkness, and hieroglyphics written on the tablets of the brain. *They* wheeled in mazes; *I* spelled the steps. *They* telegraphed from afar; *I* read the signals. *They* conspired together; and on the mirrors of darkness *my* eye traced the plots. *Theirs* were the symbols; *mine* are the words.

What is it the Sisters are? What is it that they do? Let me describe their form and their presence, if form it were that still fluctuated in its outline, or presence it were that for ever advanced to the front or for ever receded amongst shades.

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, where a voice was heard of lamentation—Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted.<sup>4</sup> She it was that stood in

<sup>1</sup> *I. e.*, holding a scholarship, provided for in the college's original endowment.

<sup>2</sup> The Fates.

<sup>3</sup> Tapestry, originally tapestry made at Arras, France.

<sup>4</sup> See Jeremiah, xxxi, 15, and St. Matthew, ii, 18.

Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened for ever which, heard at times as they trotted along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven. Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy, by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds, oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies, or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This Sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sat all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with, whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth, to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the spring-time of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, He recalled her to himself. But her blind father mourns for ever over *her*; still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is *now* within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bedchamber of the Czar, bringing before his eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound.<sup>1</sup> By the power of the keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides, a ghostly intruder, into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honor with the title of "Madonna."

The second Sister is called *Mater Suspriorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their

story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops for ever, for ever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic, raging in the highest against heaven, and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamors, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This Sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in the Mediterranean galleys; of the English criminal in Norfolk Island,<sup>2</sup> blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England; of the baffled penitent reverting his eyes for ever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother, as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered;<sup>3</sup> every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsman,

<sup>2</sup>In the southern Pacific, east of Australia; formerly used by England as a penal settlement.

<sup>3</sup>This, the reader will be aware, applies chiefly to the cotton and tobacco States of North America; but not to them only: on which account I have not scrupled to figure the sun, which looks down upon slavery, as *tropical*,—no matter if strictly within the tropics, or simply so near to them as to produce a similar climate (De Quincey's note).

<sup>1</sup>The Princess Alexandra, third daughter of the Czar Nicholas, died in August, 1844.



whom God will judge; every captive in every dungeon; all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace—all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key, but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem,<sup>1</sup> and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third Sister, who is also the youngest—! Hush! whisper whilst we talk of *her*! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele,<sup>2</sup> rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes, rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But, being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest Sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*—Our Lady of Darkness.

These were the *Semnai Theai* or Sublime Goddesses,<sup>3</sup> these were the *Eumenides* or

Gracious Ladies (so called by antiquity in shuddering propitiation) of my Oxford dreams. Madonna spoke. She spoke by her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to Our Lady of Sighs; and *what* she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this:

"Lo! here is he whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled; and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he become idolatrous; and through me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshipped the worm, and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness; saintly its corruption. Him, this young idolator, I have seasoned for thee, dear gentle Sister of Sighs! Do thou take him now to *thy* heart, and season him for our dreadful sister. And thou,"—turning to the *Mater Tenebrarum*, she said—"wicked sister, that temptest and hatest, do thou take him from *her*. See that thy scepter lie heavy on his head. Suffer not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope, wither the relenting of love, scorch the fountains of tears, curse him as only *thou* canst curse. So shall he be accomplished in the furnace, so shall he see the things that ought *not* to be seen, sights that are abominable, and secrets that are unutterable. So shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths, fearful truths. So shall he rise again *before* he dies. And so shall our commission be accomplished which from God we had—to plague his heart until we had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."<sup>4</sup>

*sublime*—as near as a Greek word *could* come (De Quincey's note).

<sup>4</sup>The reader who wishes at all to understand the course of these Confessions ought not to pass over this dream-legend. There is no great wonder that a vision which occupied my waking thoughts in those years should reappear in my dreams. It was, in fact, a legend recurring in sleep, most of which I had myself silently written or sculptured in my daylight reveries. But its importance to the present Confessions is this, that it rehearses or prefigures their course. This *FIRST* part belongs to Madonna. The *THIRD* belongs to the "*Mater Suspiriorum*," and will be entitled *The Pariah Worlds*. The *FOURTH*, which terminates the work, belongs to the "*Mater Tenebrarum*," and will be entitled *The Kingdom of Darkness*. As to the *SECOND*, it is an interpolation requisite to the effect of the others, and will be explained in its proper place (De Quincey's note). The plan here somewhat vaguely outlined was never completed by De Quincey.

<sup>1</sup>See Genesis, ix, 27.

<sup>2</sup>Nature goddess of the peoples of Asia Minor. She was pictured wearing a turreted diadem.

<sup>3</sup>The word *σεμνός* is usually rendered *venerable* in dictionaries—not a very flattering epithet for females. But I am disposed to think that it comes nearest to our idea of the

## THOMAS CARLYLE (1795-1881)

Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, on 4 December, 1795. His father was a stone-mason, and a man of highly unusual character. "More remarkable man than my father," the son wrote, "I have never met in my journey through life; sterling sincerity in thought, word, and deed, most quiet, but capable of blazing into whirlwinds when needful, and such a flash of just insight and natural eloquence and emphasis, true to every feature of it, as I have never known in any other. . . . None of us will ever forget that bold, glowing style of his, flowing free from the untutored soul, full of metaphor, though he knew not what metaphor was, with all manner of potent words which he appropriated and applied with surprising accuracy." This characterization of his father helps us to see how Carlyle came to be the man he was, for sincerity was the touchstone by which the son later tried the world's great men, and the son's burning yet struggling utterance was clearly the development of a heritage. As a boy Carlyle received his first training in the village of his birth, and there showed such mental aptitude that his parents sent him to the Annan Grammar School in 1805. As he continued to show parts above the usual, his parents hoped that he might qualify himself for the ministry of the Scottish Kirk, and so in the fall of 1809 Carlyle walked the eighty miles from Ecclefechan to Edinburgh to enter the University there. At Edinburgh he continued, as at Annan, to read widely, but with little or no guidance. Edinburgh he later called "the worst of all hitherto discovered universities," which means, as has been said, that he found no Fichte there to pierce the deep springs of idealism in his nature. Full self-discovery was only to come later, after painful enough wanderings. In 1814 he left the University and became the mathematical teacher at Annan Grammar School. Two years later he was appointed master of a school in Kirkcaldy, a position which he held until the fall of 1818. Meanwhile doubts had been growing in him about entrance into the ministry, and he had finally determined in 1817 that he could not do it—a decision severely disappointing to his parents but one which they accepted without remonstrance. After leaving Kirkcaldy Carlyle spent some time in Edinburgh, doing some writing and attempting to study the law, but the law too he found impossible as a career. And while he was thus uncertain about his future he was suffering physical anguish from

dyspepsia, a curse which never left him, and spiritual anguish from the confused state of his beliefs. Unable to accept the simple Christianity of his mother, or any miraculously revealed religion, he yet reacted against the "mechanical philosophy" of the eighteenth century. He accepted the destructive work of Hume and Gibbon, whom he had been reading, but not their explicit or implied constructions—yet he knew of nothing with which to fill the void. It was at this juncture that he began the study of German, and presently found answers to his questions in the works of the transcendentalists, particularly in Jean Paul Richter and Fichte. In 1822 he began doing some writing for periodicals about his German discoveries, and from that year until 1824 he held a position as tutor in the Buller family. Meanwhile in 1821 he had met Jane Baillie Welsh, a brilliant girl to whom he was deeply attracted and whom he later married, in 1826.

By this time Carlyle was definitely committed to literature as a career. He and his wife lived in Edinburgh until 1828, when they moved to Craigenputtock, a farm-house in Dumfriesshire, fifteen miles from anywhere. The loneliness of the place was disagreeable to Mrs. Carlyle but the two lived there, save for visits to London—when Carlyle became acquainted with John Stuart Mill and other men of letters—and Edinburgh, for six years; and during the earlier years of this period Carlyle fairly found himself, and managed to get expressed in *Sartor Resartus* the chief ideas on which his later writings depend. In 1834 he moved to London and took the house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, in which he lived throughout the remainder of his life. He was now at work upon his history of *The French Revolution*. Composition was always extraordinarily difficult for him, and while work was in progress he lived in anguish and despair. Mrs. Carlyle spoke, when a later work was being written, about living in "the valley of the shadow of Cromwell." But, as if this were not enough, when the first volume of *The French Revolution* was finished Carlyle suffered an additional grievous blow. He lent the manuscript of the volume to J. S. Mill, who lent it to Mrs. Taylor, whose maid burned it up. Carlyle had no notes, he was shattered by the pains the volume had cost him, he was hoping in despair only somehow to get the work *done*, whether it should be good or bad, and he was writing, besides, against time, as he had practically no money and was staking everything on

this book. The misfortune, however, brought out all the fineness of his nature in the gentleness with which he treated Mill, and, after several months of ineffectual effort, he heroically set to work and rewrote his volume. In January, 1837, the work was finished, and was published that year. Carlyle said to his wife, "I know not whether this book is worth anything, nor what the world will do with it, or misdo, or entirely forbear to do, as is likeliest; but this I could tell the world: You have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man. Do what you like with it, you." The world bought, and read, and praised, and Carlyle's position as a writer was secure from this time. In the years from 1837 to 1840 he delivered several courses of lectures in London, one of which, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Hero in History*, has been probably his most widely read book. During these years, he was also occupied in applying his ideas to contemporary political and social questions. He published *Chartism* in 1840 and *Past and Present* in 1843. In 1845 he published *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, in 1850 the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, and in 1851 *The Life of John Sterling*. Sterling was a disciple of Coleridge and a man of singularly winning personality who, before his untimely death, had attracted the interest and friendship of Carlyle. From 1851 until 1865

he was at work upon his *History of Frederick the Great*, which was published in six volumes, 1858-1865. In the latter year he was elected Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, where he delivered his inaugural address in April, 1866, less than three weeks before the sudden death of Mrs. Carlyle. His marriage had been, as is now known, one in name only; the domestic scene had often been stormy; and Mrs. Carlyle's death awoke in her husband bitter remorse for the wrongs which he began to feel he had done her. The remaining years of his life were full of honors from the outer world, full of sadness welling up from the world within. He died on 5 February, 1881, and was buried at Ecclefechan.

*Sartor Resartus* is the most fully expressive of Carlyle's writings, and it contains all the ideas which he variously developed in his other works. They are not many. "Belief in human freedom and in the 'infinite nature of Duty,' as the basis of religion; belief in the rule of the few wise and strong over the many weak and foolish, as the basis of government; belief in mutual sympathy, as the basis of society; belief in a spiritual interpretation of natural appearances, as the basis of philosophy; and, above all, belief in sincerity as the condition of all knowledge—these are the foundations upon which Carlyle built, and they will all be found well and truly laid in *Sartor*" (P. C. Parr, *Introd.* to *Sartor*, p. v.).

## SARTOR RESARTUS<sup>1</sup>

### BOOK I

#### CHAPTER I

#### PRELIMINARY

CONSIDERING our present advanced state of culture, and how the Torch of Science has now been brandished and borne about, with more or less effect, for five-thousand years and upwards; how, in these times especially, not only the Torch still burns, and perhaps more fiercely than ever, but innumerable Rush-lights, and Sulphur-matches, kindled thereat, are also glancing in every direction, so that not the smallest cranny or doghole in Nature or Art can remain unilluminated,—it might strike the reflective mind with some surprise that hitherto little or nothing of a fundamental character, whether in the way

of Philosophy or History, has been written on the subject of Clothes.

Our Theory of Gravitation is as good as perfect: Lagrange,<sup>2</sup> it is well known, has proved that the Planetary System, on this scheme, will endure for ever; Laplace,<sup>3</sup> still more cunningly, even guesses that it could not have been made on any other scheme. Whereby, at least, our nautical Logbooks can be better kept; and water-transport of all kinds has grown more commodious. Of Geology and Geognosy<sup>4</sup> we know enough: what with the labors of our Werners<sup>5</sup> and Huttons,<sup>6</sup> what with the ardent genius of their disciples, it has come about that now, to many a Royal Society, the Creation of a World is little more mysterious than the cooking of a dumpling; concerning which last, indeed, there have been minds to whom the question, *How the apples were got in,*

<sup>1</sup>First written in the fall of 1830, then revised and enlarged in the months from February until August, 1831. Printed in *Fraser's Magazine*, 1833-1834. First published as a book in America (Boston), 1836; first English edition, 1838. The title means, "the tailor patched." Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, author of the philosophy of clothes, is the tailor; Carlyle does the patching as his editor.

<sup>2</sup>French mathematician (1736-1813).

<sup>3</sup>French astronomer and mathematician (1749-1827). Carlyle saw him in Paris in 1824.

<sup>4</sup>Knowledge of the earth.

<sup>5</sup>German mineralogist and geologist (1750-1817).

<sup>6</sup>British geologist (1726-1797).



presented difficulties.<sup>1</sup> Why mention our disquisitions on the Social Contract, on the Standard of Taste, on the Migrations of the Herring? Then, have we not a Doctrine of Rent, a Theory of Value; Philosophies of Language, of History, of Pottery, of Apparitions, of Intoxicating Liquors? Man's whole life and environment have been laid open and elucidated; scarcely a fragment or fiber of his Soul, Body, and Possessions, but has been probed, dissected, distilled, desiccated,<sup>2</sup> and scientifically decomposed: our spiritual Faculties, of which it appears there are not a few, have their Stewarts,<sup>3</sup> Cousins,<sup>4</sup> Royer Collards;<sup>5</sup> every cellular, vascular, muscular Tissue glories in its Lawrences,<sup>6</sup> Majendies,<sup>7</sup> Bichâts.<sup>8</sup>

How, then, comes it, may the reflective mind repeat, that the grand Tissue of all Tissues, the only real Tissue, should have been quite overlooked by Science,—the vestural Tissue, namely, of woolen or other cloth; which Man's Soul wears as its outmost wrappage and overall; wherein his whole other Tissues are included and screened, his whole Faculties work, his whole Self lives, moves, and has its being? For if, now and then, some straggling, broken-winged thinker has cast an owl's-glance into this obscure region, the most have soared over it altogether heedless; regarding Clothes as a property, not an accident,<sup>9</sup> as quite natural and spontaneous, like the leaves of trees, like the plumage of birds. In all speculations they have tacitly figured man as a *Clothed Animal*; whereas he is by nature a *Naked Animal*; and only in certain circumstances, by purpose and device, masks himself in Clothes. Shakespeare says, we are creatures

that look before and after:<sup>10</sup> the more surprising that we do not look round a little, and see what is passing under our very eyes.

But here, as in so many other cases, Germany, learned, indefatigable, deep-thinking Germany comes to our aid. It is, after all, a blessing that, in these revolutionary times, there should be one country where abstract Thought can still take shelter; that while the din and frenzy of Catholic Emancipations,<sup>11</sup> and Rotten Boroughs,<sup>12</sup> and Revolts of Paris,<sup>13</sup> deafen every French and every English ear, the German can stand peaceful on his scientific watch-tower; and, to the raging, struggling multitude here and elsewhere, solemnly, from hour to hour, with preparatory blast of cowhorn, emit his *Höret ihr Herren und lasset's Euch sagen*,<sup>14</sup> in other words, tell the Universe, which so often forgets that fact, what o'clock it really is. Not unfrequently the Germans have been blamed for an unprofitable diligence; as if they struck into devious courses, where nothing was to be had but the toil of a rough journey; as if, forsaking the gold-mines of finance and that political slaughter of fat oxen whereby a man himself grows fat, they were apt to run goose-hunting into regions of bilberries and crowberries, and be swallowed up at last in remote peat-bogs.<sup>15</sup> Of that unwise science, which, as our Humorist expresses it,—

By geometric scale  
Doth take the size of pots of ale;<sup>16</sup>

still more, of that altogether misdirected industry, which is seen vigorously thrashing mere straw, there can nothing defensive be said. In so far as the Germans are chargeable with such, let them take the consequence. Nevertheless, be it remarked, that even a Russian steppe has tumuli and gold ornaments; also many a scene that looks desert

<sup>1</sup>The question is asked by George III in *The Apple Dumplings and the King*, a poem by John Wolcot (Peter Pindar).

<sup>2</sup>Dried up.

<sup>3</sup>Philosopher, professor at Edinburgh University (1753-1828).

<sup>4</sup>Philosopher and statesman (1792-1867).

<sup>5</sup>Philosopher, taught the doctrines of Thomas Reid (1763-1845).

<sup>6</sup>English surgeon and anatomist (1783-1867).

<sup>7</sup>French physiologist, one of the earliest vivisectionists (1783-1855).

<sup>8</sup>French surgeon and physiologist (1771-1802).

<sup>9</sup>Terms used in logic. A "property" is an attribute which is inseparable from an object without altering its essential nature; an "accident" is an attribute which may be removed, or may be supposed removed, without altering an object's essence. In man the power of understanding speech is a property; his color is an accident.

<sup>10</sup>*Hamlet*, IV, iv, 37.

<sup>11</sup>The bill removing civil disabilities from Roman Catholics was passed in 1829.

<sup>12</sup>Electoral districts having few or no voters. The Reform Bill of 1832 abolished 56 of these boroughs and gave representation in Parliament to other and populous districts which had had none.

<sup>13</sup>In the Three Days' Revolution of July, 1830, Charles X was expelled from the French throne and Louis-Philippe installed in his place.

<sup>14</sup>Listen, gentlemen, and let me tell you.

<sup>15</sup>*I. e.*, go off on a wild-geese chase.

<sup>16</sup>Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, Pt. I, canto i, ll. 121-122.

and rock-bound from the distance, will unfold itself, when visited, into rare valleys. Nay, in any case, would Criticism erect not only finger-posts and turnpikes, but spiked gates and impassable barriers, for the mind of man? It is written, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."<sup>1</sup> Surely the plain rule is, Let each considerate person have his way, and see what it will lead to. For not this man and that man, but all men make up mankind, and their united tasks the task of mankind. How often have we seen some such adventurous, and perhaps much-censured wanderer light on some out-lying, neglected, yet vitally momentous province; the hidden treasures of which he first discovered, and kept proclaiming till the general eye and effort were directed thither, and the conquest was completed;—thereby, in these his seemingly so aimless rambles, planting new standards, founding new habitable colonies, in the immeasurable circumambient realm of Nothingness and Night! Wise man was he who counseled that Speculation should have free course, and look fearlessly towards all the thirty-two points of the compass, whithersoever and howsoever it listed.

Perhaps it is proof of the stunted condition in which pure Science, especially pure moral Science, languishes among us English; and how our mercantile greatness, and invaluable Constitution, impressing a political or other immediately practical tendency on all English culture and endeavor, cramps the free flight of Thought,—that this, not Philosophy of Clothes, but recognition even that we have no such Philosophy, stands here for the first time published in our language. What English intellect could have chosen such a topic, or by chance stumbled on it? But for that same unshackled, and even sequestered condition of the German Learned,<sup>2</sup> which permits and induces them to fish in all manner of waters, with all manner of nets, it seems probable enough, this abstruse Inquiry might, in spite of the results it leads to, have continued dormant for indefinite periods. The Editor of these sheets, though otherwise boasting himself a man of confirmed speculative habits, and perhaps discursive enough, is free to confess, that never, till these last

months, did the above very plain considerations, on our total want of a Philosophy of Clothes, occur to him; and then, by quite foreign suggestion. By the arrival, namely, of a new Book from Professor Teufelsdröckh<sup>3</sup> of Weissnichtwo;<sup>4</sup> treating expressly of this subject, and in a style which, whether understood or not, could not even by the blindest be overlooked. In the present Editor's way of thought, this remarkable Treatise, with its Doctrines, whether as judicially acceded to, or judicially denied, has not remained without effect.

"Die Kleider, ihr Werden und Wirken (Clothes, their Origin and Influence): von Diog. Teufelsdröckh, J. U. D. etc. Stillschweigen und Co<sup>ms</sup>.<sup>5</sup> Weissnichtwo, 1831.

"Here," says the *Weissnichtwo'sche Anzeiger*,<sup>6</sup> "comes a Volume of that extensive, close-printed, close-meditated sort, which, be it spoken with pride, is seen only in Germany, perhaps only in Weissnichtwo. Issuing from the hitherto irreproachable Firm of Stillschweigen and Company, with every external furtherance, it is of such internal quality as to set Neglect at defiance." . . . "A work," concludes the well-nigh enthusiastic Reviewer, "interesting alike to the antiquary, the historian, and the philosophic thinker; a masterpiece of boldness, lynx-eyed acuteness, and rugged independent Germanism and Philanthropy (*derber Kern-deutschheit und Menschenliebe*); which will not, assuredly, pass current without opposition in high places; but must and will exalt the almost new name of Teufelsdröckh to the first ranks of Philosophy, in our German Temple of Honor."

Mindful of old friendship, the distinguished Professor, in this the first blaze of his fame, which however does not dazzle him, sends hither a Presentation-copy of his Book; with compliments and encomiums which modesty forbids the present Editor to rehearse; yet without indicated wish or hope of any kind, except what may be implied in the concluding phrase: *Möchte es* (this remarkable Treatise) *auch im Brittischen Boden gedeihen!*<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Diogenes Teufelsdröckh means: God-born Devil's-dung.

<sup>4</sup>Know-not-where.

<sup>5</sup>Silence and Company. J. U. D. means: Doctor of Laws.

<sup>6</sup>Advertiser.

<sup>7</sup>May it flourish also on British soil!

<sup>1</sup>Daniel, xii, 4.

<sup>2</sup>I. e., scholar (*Gelahrter*).

CHAPTER IV  
CHARACTERISTICS

IT WERE a piece of vain flattery to pretend that this Work on Clothes entirely contents us; that it is not, like all works of genius, like the very Sun, which, though the highest published creation, or work of genius, has nevertheless black spots and troubled nebulosities amid its effulgence,—a mixture of insight, inspiration, with dullness, double-vision, and even utter blindness.

Without committing ourselves to those enthusiastic praises and prophesyings of the *Weissnichtwo'sche Anzeiger*, we admitted that the Book had in a high degree excited us to self-activity, which is the best effect of any book; that it had even operated changes in our way of thought; nay, that it promised to prove, as it were, the opening of a new mine-shaft, wherein the whole world of Speculation might henceforth dig to unknown depths. More especially it may now be declared that Professor Teufelsdröckh's acquirements, patience of research, philosophic and even poetic vigor, are here made indisputably manifest; and unhappily no less his prolixity and tortuosity and manifold ineptitude; that, on the whole, as in opening new mine shafts is not unreasonable, there is much rubbish in his Book, though likewise specimens of almost invaluable ore. A paramount popularity in England we cannot promise him. Apart from the choice of such a topic as Clothes, too often the manner of treating it betokens in the Author a rusticity and academic seclusion, unblamable, indeed inevitable in a German, but fatal to his success with our public.

Of good society Teufelsdröckh appears to have seen little, or has mostly forgotten what he saw. He speaks-out with a strange plainness; calls many things by their mere dictionary names. To him the Upholsterer is no Pontiff, neither is any Drawing-room a Temple, were it never so begilt and overhung: "a whole immensity of Brussels carpets, and pier-glasses, and or-molu," as he himself expresses it, "cannot hide from me that such Drawing-room is simply a section of Infinite Space, where so many God-created Souls do for the time meet together." To Teufelsdröckh the highest Duchess is respectable, is venerable; but nowise for her pearl bracelets

and Malines laces: in his eyes, the star<sup>1</sup> of a Lord is little less and little more than the broad button of Birmingham spelter<sup>2</sup> in a Clown's smock; "each is an implement," he says, "in its kind; a tag for *hooking-together*; and, for the rest, was dug from the earth, and hammered on a stithy before smith's fingers." Thus does the Professor look in men's faces with a strange impartiality, a strange scientific freedom; like a man unversed in the higher circles, like a man dropped thither from the Moon. Rightly considered, it is in this peculiarity, running through his whole system of thought, that all these short-comings, over-shootings, and multiform perversities, take rise: if indeed they have not a second source, also natural enough, in his Transcendental Philosophies, and humor of looking at all Matter and Material things as Spirit;<sup>3</sup> whereby truly his case were but the more hopeless, the more lamentable.

To the Thinkers of this nation, however, of which class it is firmly believed there are individuals yet extant, we can safely recommend the Work: nay, who knows but among the fashionable ranks too, if it be true, as Teufelsdröckh maintains, that "within the most starched cravat there passes a windpipe and weasand, and under the thickest embroidered waistcoat beats a heart,"—the force of that rapt earnestness may be felt, and here and there an arrow of the soul pierce through? In our wild Seer, shaggy, unkempt, like a Baptist living on locusts and wild honey,<sup>4</sup> there is an untutored energy, a silent, as it were unconscious, strength, which, except in the higher walks of Literature, must be rare. Many a deep glance, and often with unspeakable precision, has he cast into mysterious Nature, and the still more mysterious Life of Man. Wonderful it is with what cutting words, now and then, he severs asunder the confusion; sheers

<sup>1</sup>Part of the insignia of such orders as the Bath and the Garter is a jeweled ornament having the shape of a star.

<sup>2</sup>Zinc.

<sup>3</sup>The guiding principle of all Carlyle's ethical work is the principle of Fichte's speculation, that the world of experience is but the appearance or vesture of the divine idea or life; that in this divine life lie the springs of true poetry, of true science, and of true religion; and that he only has true life whose spirit is interpenetrated with the realities transcending empirical facts, who is willing to resign his own personality in the service of humanity, and who strives incessantly to work out the ideal that gives nobility and grandeur to human effort" (R. Adamson, *Fichte*, p. 79).

<sup>4</sup>St. Matthew, iii, 1-6.



down, were it furlongs deep, into the true center of the matter; and there not only hits the nail on the head, but with crushing force smites it home, and buries it.—On the other hand, let us be free to admit, he is the most unequal writer breathing. Often after some such feat, he will play truant for long pages, and go dawdling and dreaming, and mumbling and maundering the merest commonplaces, as if he were asleep with eyes open, which indeed he is.

Of his boundless Learning, and how all reading and literature in most known tongues from *Sanchoniathon*<sup>1</sup> to *Dr. Lingard*,<sup>2</sup> from your Oriental *Shasters*,<sup>3</sup> and *Talmuds*, and *Korans*, with Cassini's<sup>4</sup> *Siamese Tables*, and Laplace's *Mécanique Céleste*, down to *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Belfast Town and Country Almanack*, are familiar to him,—we shall say nothing: for unexampl'd as it is with us, to the Germans such universality of study passes without wonder, as a thing commendable, indeed, but natural, indispensable, and there of course. A man that devotes his life to learning, shall he not be learned?

In respect of style our Author manifests the same genial capability, marred too often by the same rudeness, inequality, and apparent want of intercourse with the higher classes. Occasionally, as above hinted, we find consummate vigor, a true inspiration; his burning thoughts step forth in fit burning words, like so many full-formed Minervas, issuing amid flame and splendor from Jove's head; a rich, idiomatic diction, picturesque allusions, fiery poetic emphasis, or quaint tricky turns; all the graces and terrors of a wild Imagination, wedded to the clearest Intellect, alternate in beautiful vicissitude. Were it not that sheer sleeping and soporific passages; circumlocutions, repetitions, touches even of pure doting jargon, so often intervene! On the whole, Professor Teufelsdröckh is not a cultivated writer. Of his sentences perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes, buttressed-up by props (of parentheses and dashes), and

ever with this or the other tagrag hanging from them; a few even sprawl-out helplessly on all sides, quite broken-backed and dismembered. Nevertheless, in almost his very worst moods, there lies in him a singular attraction. A wild tone pervades the whole utterance of the man, like its keynote and regulator; now screwing itself aloft as into the Song of Spirits, or else the shrill mockery of Fiends; now sinking in cadences, not without melodious heartiness, though sometimes abrupt enough, into the common pitch, when we hear it only as a monotonous hum; of which hum the true character is extremely difficult to fix. Up to this hour we have never fully satisfied ourselves whether it is a tone and hum of real Humor, which we reckon among the very highest qualities of genius, or some echo of mere Insanity and Inanity, which doubtless ranks below the very lowest.

Under a like difficulty, in spite even of our personal intercourse, do we still lie with regard to the Professor's moral feeling. Gleams of an ethereal Love burst forth from him, soft wailings of infinite pity; he could clasp the whole Universe into his bosom, and keep it warm; it seems as if under that rude exterior there dwelt a very seraph. Then again he is so sly and still, so imperturbably saturnine; shows such indifference, malign coolness towards all that men strive after; and ever with some half-visible wrinkle of a bitter sardonic humor, if indeed it be not mere stolid callousness,—that you look on him almost with a shudder, as on some incarnate Mephistopheles, to whom this great terrestrial and celestial Round, after all, were but some huge foolish Whirligig, where kings and beggars, and angels and demons, and stars and street-sweepings, were chaotically whirled, in which only children could take interest. His look, as we mentioned, is probably the gravest ever seen: yet it is not of that cast-iron gravity frequent enough among our own Chancery suitors; but rather the gravity as of some silent, high-encircled mountain-pool, perhaps the crater of an extinct volcano; into whose black depths you fear to gaze: those eyes, those

<sup>1</sup>The name of a supposed Phœnician writer whose works, real or pretended, were used by Philo Byblius in a Phœnician history, part of which is preserved in Eusebius.

<sup>2</sup>English Roman Catholic historian (1771–1851).

<sup>3</sup>Textbooks of Hindu laws and religion.

<sup>4</sup>The name of a family of French astronomers who long controlled the Paris Observatory.

<sup>5</sup>An evil spirit, or devil. He appears in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and Goethe's *Faust*.

<sup>6</sup>In Carlyle's day the English Court of Chancery was a place of almost infinite delays and red tape.

lights that sparkle in it, may indeed be reflexes of the heavenly Stars, but perhaps also glances from the region of Nether Fire!

Certainly a most involved, self-secluded, altogether enigmatic nature, this of Teufelsdröckh! Here, however, we gladly recall to mind that once we saw him *laugh*; once only, perhaps it was the first and last time in his life; but then such a peal of laughter, enough to have awakened the Seven Sleepers!<sup>1</sup> It was of Jean Paul's<sup>2</sup> doing: some single billow in that vast World-Mahlstrom<sup>3</sup> of Humor, with its heaven-kissing coruscations, which is now, alas, all congealed in the frost of death! The large-bodied Poet and the small, both large enough in soul, sat talking miscellaneous together, the present Editor being privileged to listen; and now Paul, in his serious way, was giving one of those inimitable "Extra-harangles"; and, as it chanced, On the Proposal for a *Cast-metal King*: gradually a light kindled in our Professor's eyes and face, a beaming, mantling, loveliest light; through those murky features, a radiant, ever-young Apollo looked; and he burst forth like the neighing of all Tattersall's,<sup>4</sup>—tears streaming down his cheeks, pipe held aloft, foot clutched into the air,—loud, long-continuing, uncontrollable; a laugh not of the face and diaphragm only, but of the whole man from head to heel. The present Editor, who laughed indeed, yet with measure, began to fear all was not right: however, Teufelsdröckh composed himself, and sank into his old stillness; on his inscrutable countenance there was, if anything, a slight look of shame; and Richter himself could not rouse him again. Readers who have any tincture of Psychology know how much is to be inferred from this; and that no man who has once heartily and wholly laughed can be altogether irreclaimably bad. How much lies in Laughter: the cipher-key, wherewith we decipher the whole man! Some men wear an everlasting barren simper; in the smile of others lies a cold glitter as of ice: the fewest are able to laugh, what can be called laughing, but only sniff and titter and snigger from the throat outwards; or at best, produce some

whiffing husky cachinnation,<sup>5</sup> as if they were laughing through wool: of none such comes good. The man who cannot laugh is not only fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;<sup>6</sup> but his whole life is already a treason and a stratagem.

Considered as an Author, Herr Teufelsdröckh has one scarcely pardonable fault, doubtless his worst: an almost total want of arrangement. In this remarkable Volume, it is true, his adherence to the mere course of Time produces, through the Narrative portions, a certain show of outward method; but of true logical method and sequence there is too little. Apart from its multifarious sections and subdivisions, the Work naturally falls into two Parts; a Historical-Descriptive, and a Philosophical-Speculative: but falls, unhappily, by no firm line of demarcation; in that labyrinthic combination, each Part overlaps, and indents, and indeed runs quite through the other. Many sections are of a debatable rubric,<sup>7</sup> or even quite nondescript and unnameable; whereby the Book not only loses in accessibility, but too often distresses us like some mad banquet, wherein all courses had been confounded, and fish and flesh, soup and solid, oyster-sauce, lettuces, Rhine-wine and French mustard, were hurled into one huge tureen or trough, and the hungry Public invited to help itself. To bring what order we can out of this Chaos shall be part of our endeavor.

### BOOK III

#### CHAPTER VIII

##### NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM

IT IS in his stupendous Section, headed *Natural Supernaturalism*, that the Professor first becomes a Seer; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "Cloth-webs and Cob-webs," of Imperial Mantles, Superannuated Symbols, and what not: yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worst of all, two quite

<sup>1</sup>Of Ephesus. (See note to De Quincey's *Confessions*, first passage.)

<sup>2</sup>Jean Paul Friedrich Richter (1763–1825), German humorist.

<sup>3</sup>A whirlpool in the Arctic Ocean near the coast of Norway.

<sup>4</sup>A famous horse-market and stable in London.

<sup>5</sup>Immoderate laugh.

<sup>6</sup>*Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 85.

<sup>7</sup>Chapter or subject headings, or the like, written in red in early manuscripts.



TIME and SPACE,<sup>1</sup> have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering: but with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Here, therefore, properly it is that the Philosophy of Clothes attains to Transcendentalism;<sup>2</sup> this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where *Palingenesia*,<sup>3</sup> in all senses, may be considered as beginning. "Courage, then!" may our Diogenes exclaim, with better right than Diogenes the First once did. This stupendous Section we, after long painful meditation, have found not to be unintelligible; but, on the contrary, to grow clear, nay radiant, and all-illuminating. Let the reader, turning on it what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him, do his part; as we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours:

"Deep has been, and is, the significance of Miracles," thus quietly begins the Professor; "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a Miracle? To that Dutch King of Siam, an icicle had been a miracle;<sup>4</sup> whoso had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my Horse, again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical '*Open sesame!*'<sup>5</sup> every time I please to pay twopence, and open for him an impassable *Schlagbaum*, or shut Turnpike?

<sup>1</sup>"Time and Space . . . are not external but internal entities: they have no outward existence; there is no Time and no Space out of the mind; they are mere forms of man's spiritual being, laws under which his thinking nature is constituted to act. This seems the hardest conclusion of all, but it is an important one with Kant; and is not given forth as a dogma but carefully deduced in his *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* with great precision and the strictest form of argument." (Carlyle, Essay on Novalis.) In the present chapter, of course, Carlyle speaks rather as a poet and mystic than as a philosopher.

<sup>2</sup>"The Idealist . . . boasts that his Philosophy is Transcendental, that is 'ascending beyond the senses'; which, he asserts, all Philosophy, properly so-called, by its nature is and must be." (Carlyle, Essay on Novalis.)

<sup>3</sup>New birth.

<sup>4</sup>"The Indian prince who refused to believe the first relations concerning the effects of frost reasoned justly" (Hume, *Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding*, Sec. x). In this and following paragraphs Carlyle has in mind Hume's discussion of miracles.

<sup>5</sup>The magical words used to open the cave in the story of "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" in *The Arabian Nights*.

"But is not a real Miracle simply a violation of the Laws of Nature?' ask several. Whom I answer by this new question: What are the Laws of Nature? To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these Laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper Law, now first penetrated into, and by Spiritual Force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its Material Force.

"Here too may some inquire, not without astonishment: On what ground shall one, that can make Iron swim,<sup>6</sup> come and declare that therefore he can teach Religion? To us, truly, of the Nineteenth Century, such declaration were inept enough, which nevertheless to our fathers, of the First Century, was full of meaning.

"But is it not the deepest Law of Nature that she be constant?" cries an illuminated class: 'Is not the Machine of the Universe fixed to move by unalterable rules?' Probable enough, good friends: nay I, too, must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be 'without variableness or shadow of turning,'<sup>7</sup> does indeed never change; that Nature, that the Universe, which no one whom it so pleases can be prevented from calling a Machine, does move by the most unalterable rules. And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete Statute-Book of Nature, may possibly be?

"They stand written in our Works of Science, say you; in the accumulated records of Man's Experience?—Was Man with his Experience present at the Creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the Universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel;<sup>8</sup> that they read His ground-plan of the incomprehensible All; and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in anywise! These scientific individuals have been nowhere but where we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore.

"Laplace's Book on the Stars, wherein he exhibits that certain Planets, with their Satellites, gyrate round our worthy Sun, at a

<sup>6</sup>2 Kings, vi, 6.

<sup>7</sup>St. James, i, 17.

<sup>8</sup>See Job, xxxviii, 4-18.



rate and in a course, which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting,—is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest ‘Mechanism of the Heavens,’ and ‘System of the World’; this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel’s<sup>1</sup> Fifteen-thousand Suns per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons, and inert Balls, had been—looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane?

“System of Nature! To the wisest man, as wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite infinite depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles. The course of Nature’s phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us: but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle<sup>2</sup> revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon’s Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (*unmiraculously* enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a Minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Æons of Æons.

“We speak of the Volume of Nature: and truly a Volume it is,—whose Author and Writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of Science, they strive bravely;

and, from amid the thick-crowded, inextricably intertwined hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dextrous combinations, some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice. That Nature is more than some boundless Volume of such Recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible Domestic-Cookery Book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve itself, the fewest dream.

“Custom,” continues the Professor, “doth make dotards of us all.<sup>3</sup> Consider well, thou wilt find that Custom is the greatest of Weavers; and weaves air-raiment for all the Spirits of the Universe; whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops; but their spiritual nature becomes, to the most, for ever hidden. Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to *transcend* the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?

“Innumerable are the illusions and legerdemain-tricks of Custom: but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the Miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be Miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder: and herein is Custom so far a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond foolish nurse, or rather we are false foolish nurslings, when, in our resting and reflecting hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the Stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two-hundred, or two-million times? There is no reason in Nature or in Art why I should: unless, indeed, I am a mere Work-Machine, for whom the divine gift of Thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of Steam is to the Steam-engine; a power whereby cotton might be spun, and money and money’s worth realized.

“Notable enough too, here as elsewhere, wilt thou find the potency of Names; which

<sup>1</sup>An English astronomer, of German birth (1738-1822).

<sup>2</sup>A circle whose center moves round in the circumference of a greater circle.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *Hamlet*, III, i: “Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.”

indeed are but one kind of such custom-woven, wonder-hiding Garments. Witchcraft, and all manner of Specter-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness, and Diseases of the Nerves. Seldom reflecting that still the new question comes upon us: What is Madness, what are Nerves? Ever, as before, does Madness remain a mysterious-terrific, altogether *infernal* boiling-up of the Nether Chaotic Deep, through this fair-painted Vision of Creation, which swims thereon, which we name the Real. Was Luther's Picture of the Devil less a Reality, whether it were formed within the bodily eye, or without it? In every the wisest Soul lies a whole world of internal Madness, an authentic Demon Empire; out of which, indeed, his world of Wisdom has been creatively built together, and now rests there, as on its dark foundations does a habitable flowery Earth-rind.

"But deepest of all illusory Appearances, for hiding Wonder, as for many other ends, are your two grand fundamental world-enveloping Appearances, SPACE and TIME.<sup>2</sup> These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here, and yet to blind it,—lie all-embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on Earth, shall you endeavor to strip them off; you can, at best, but rend them asunder for moments, and look through.

"Fortunatus had a wishing Hat, which when he put on, and wished himself Anywhere, behold he was There. By this means had Fortunatus triumphed over Space, he had annihilated Space;<sup>3</sup> for him there was no Where, but all was Here. Were a Hatter to establish himself, in the Wahngasse<sup>4</sup> of

<sup>1</sup>"In the room of the Wartburg, where he sat translating the Bible, they still show you a black spot on the wall; the strange memorial of one of these conflicts. Luther sat translating one of the Psalms; he was worn-down with long labor, with sickness, abstinence from food: there rose before him some hideous indefinite Image, which he took for the Evil One to forbid his work. Luther started up, with fiend-defiance; flung the inkstand at the specter and it disappeared!" (Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, "The Hero as Priest.") Carlyle hardly answers the difficult question he raises.

<sup>2</sup>See note at beginning of this chapter.

<sup>3</sup>Carlyle's instance illustrates the difficulty of triumphing over space, even in thought, as of course Fortunatus did not annihilate space; when he was "there" he was no longer "here." His quickness of movement has really nothing to do with the matter.

<sup>4</sup>Mad Street.

Weissnichtwò, and make felts of this sort for all mankind, what a world we should have of it! Still stranger, should, on the opposite side of the street, another Hatter establish himself, and as his fellow-craftsman made Space-annihilating Hats, make Time-annihilating! Of both would I purchase, were it with my last groschen;<sup>5</sup> but chiefly of this latter. To clap-on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Anywhere, straightway to be There! Next to clap-on your other felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Anywhen, straightway to be Then! This were indeed the grander: shooting at will from the Fire-Creation of the World to its Fire-Consummation; here historically present in the First Century, conversing face to face with Paul and Seneca;<sup>6</sup> there prophetically in the Thirty-first, conversing also face to face with other Pauls and Senecas, who as yet stand hidden in the depth of that late Time!

"Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the Past annihilated, then, or only past; is the Future non-existent, or only future? Those mystic faculties of thine. Memory and Hope, already answer: already through those mystic avenues, thou the Earth-blinded summonest both Past and Future, and communest with them, though as yet darkly, and with mute beckonings. The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of To-morrow roll up; but Yesterday and To-morrow, both *are*. Pierce through the Time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of Man's Soul, even as all Thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there: that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God; that with God as it is a universal HERE, so is it an everlasting NOW.

"And seest thou therein any glimpse of IMMORTALITY?—O Heaven! Is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone,—but a pale spectral Illusion! Is the lost Friend still mysteriously Here, even as we are Here mysteriously, with God!—Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or

<sup>5</sup>German coin, worth about two cents (not used since 1876).

<sup>6</sup>They were contemporaries. Seneca (A. D. 4–65) was a Roman philosopher and tutor of Nero.



are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and for ever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries: believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

"That the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings,—seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue rank of Realities; and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-efulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and therewith clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practices on us.

"Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand anti-magician,\* and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy,<sup>1</sup> and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

"Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus,<sup>2</sup> or Amphion,<sup>3</sup> built the walls of

Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summoning out all the sandstone rocks, to dance along from the *Steinbruch*<sup>4</sup> (now a huge Troglodyte<sup>5</sup> Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses<sup>6</sup> and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilizing Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen-hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

"Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover.<sup>7</sup> The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck, and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

"Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? The English Johnson longed, all his life, to see one; but could not, though he went to Cock Lane,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Working of miracles.

<sup>2</sup>Son of Apollo and Calliope. He was Eurydice's husband and descended to Hades, charming its guardians by his music, to rescue her from death.

<sup>3</sup>Son of Zeus and Antiope. Mercury taught him to play on the lyre and, when he became King of Thebes, he charmed stones by his playing to move of their own accord to their places in the wall he was building.

<sup>4</sup>Stone-quarry.

<sup>5</sup>The Troglodytes were cave-dwellers of prehistoric times.

<sup>6</sup>Houses built of hewn stone.

<sup>7</sup>The First Cause, or God.

<sup>8</sup>The Cock Lane ghost (really a young girl who deceived the credulous) excited much attention in London in 1762. Dr. Johnson was always anxious for evidence for the super-



and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins. Foolish Doctor! Did he never, with the mind's eye as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human Life he so loved; did he never so much as look 5 into Himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well-nigh a million of Ghosts were traveling the streets by his side. Once more I say, sweep away the illusion of Time; compress the 10 threescore years into three minutes:<sup>1</sup> what else was he, what else are we? Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a 15 simple scientific *fact*: we start out of Nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us, as round the veriest specter, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and æons. Come there not tones of Love and 20 Faith, as from celestial harp-strings, like the Song of beautified Souls? And again, do not we squeak and gibber<sup>2</sup> (in our discordant, screech-owlish debates and recriminations); and glide bodeful, and feeble, and fearful; or 25 uproar (*poltern*), and revel in our mad Dance of the Dead,—till the scent of the morning air summons us to our still Home; and dreamy Night becomes awake and Day? Where now is Alexander of Macedon: does the steel 30 Host, that yelled in fierce battle-shouts at Issus and Arbela,<sup>3</sup> remain behind him; or have they all vanished utterly, even as perturbed Goblins must? Napoleon too, and his Moscow Retreats and Austerlitz Campaigns! 35 Was it all other than the veriest Specter-hunt; which has now, with its howling tumult that made Night hideous, flitted away?—Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half- 40 hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

"O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry each a future 45 Ghost within him; but are, in very deed, Ghosts! These Limbs, whence had we them;

natural, and took the stories about the ghost seriously enough to make an investigation, after which he concluded the girl to be an impostor.

<sup>1</sup>This, of course, does not touch the problem, which is to conceive of time as non-existent.

<sup>2</sup>*Hamlet*, I, i: "The sheeted dead did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

<sup>3</sup>Alexander the Great defeated Darius and the Persians in battles fought at these towns in Asia Minor.

this stormy Force: this life-blood with its burning Passion? They are dust and shadow; a Shadow-system gathered round our Me; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the Flesh. That warrior on his strong war-horse, fire flashes through his eyes; force dwells in his arm and heart: but warrior and war-horse are a vision; a revealed Force, nothing 5 more. Stately they tread the Earth, as if it were a firm substance: fool! the Earth is but a film; it cracks in twain, and warrior and war-horse sink beyond plummet's sounding. Plummet's? Fantasy herself will not follow 10 them. A little while ago, they were not; a little while, and they are not, their very ashes are not.

"So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night,<sup>4</sup> on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends: one grinding in the mill of Industry; one hunter-like climbing the giddy 25 Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow:—and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to Sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a 35 God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are leveled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a 40 vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped-in; the last Rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence?—O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

*We are such stuff*

As Dreams are made of, and our little Life  
Is rounded with a sleep!"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>The Cimmerians were a legendary people who dwelt in a land where the sun never shines.

<sup>5</sup>*Tempest*, IV, i.

CHAPTER IX  
CIRCUMSPECTIVE

HERE, then, arises the so momentous question: Have many British Readers actually arrived with us at the new promised country; is the Philosophy of Clothes now at last opening around them? Long and adventurous has the journey been: from those outmost vulgar, palpable Woolen Hulls of Man; through his wondrous Flesh-Garments, and his wondrous Social Garnitures; inwards to the Garments of his very Soul's Soul, to Time and Space themselves! And now does the spiritual, eternal Essence of Man, and of Mankind, bared of such wrappings, begin in any measure to reveal itself? Can many readers discern, as through a glass darkly, in huge wavering outlines, some primeval rudiments of Man's Being, what is changeable divided from what is unchangeable? Does that Earth-Spirit's speech in *Faust*,—

'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,  
And weave for God the Garment thou seest Him  
by;<sup>1</sup>

or that other thousand-times repeated speech of the Magician, Shakespeare,—

And like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloudcapt Towers, the gorgeous Palaces,  
The solemn Temples, the great Globe itself,  
And all which it inherit, shall dissolve;  
And like this unsubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a wrack behind;<sup>2</sup>

begin to have some meaning for us? In a word, do we at length stand safe in the far region of Poetic Creation and Palingenesia, where that Phoenix Death-Birth of Human Society, and of all Human Things, appears possible, is seen to be inevitable?

Along this most insufficient, unheard-of

<sup>1</sup>Goethe's *Faust*. The whole passage, as quoted by Carlyle elsewhere in *Sartor*, is:

"In Being's floods, in Action's storm,  
I walk and work, above, beneath,  
Work and weave in endless motion!  
Birth and Death,  
An infinite ocean;  
A seizing and giving  
The fire of Living:

'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply,  
And weave for God the Garment thou seest Him by."  
(Spoken by the Earth-Spirit.)

<sup>2</sup>*Tempest*, IV, i.

Bridge, which the Editor, by Heaven's blessing, has now seen himself enabled to conclude if not complete, it cannot be his sober calculation, but only his fond hope, that many have traveled without accident. No firm arch, overspanning the Impassable with paved highway, could the Editor construct; only, as was said,<sup>3</sup> some zigzag series of rafts floating tumultuously thereon. Alas, and the leaps from raft to raft were too often of a breakneck character; the darkness, the nature of the element, all was against us!

Nevertheless, may not here and there one of a thousand, provided with a discursiveness of intellect rare in our day, have cleared the passage, in spite of all? Happy few! little band of Friends! be welcome, be of courage. By degrees, the eye grows accustomed to its new Whereabout; the hand can stretch itself forth to work there: it is in this grand and indeed highest work of Palingenesia that ye shall labor, each according to ability. New laborers will arrive; new Bridges will be built; nay, may not our own poor rope-and-raft Bridge, in your passings and repassings, be mended in many a point, till it grow quite firm, passable even for the halt?

Meanwhile, of the innumerable multitude that started with us, joyous and full of hope, where now is the innumerable remainder, whom we see no longer by our side? The most have recoiled, and stand gazing afar off, in unsympathetic astonishment, at our career: not a few, pressing forward with more courage, have missed footing, or leaped short; and now swim weltering in the Chaos-flood, some towards this shore, some towards that. To these also a helping hand should be held out; at least some word of encouragement be said.

Or, to speak without metaphor, with which mode of utterance Teufelsdröckh unhappily has somewhat infected us,—can it be hidden from the Editor that many a British Reader sits reading quite bewildered in head, and afflicted rather than instructed by the present Work? Yes, long ago has many a British Reader been, as now, demanding with something like a snarl: Whereto does all this lead; or what use is in it?

In the way of replenishing thy purse, or otherwise aiding thy digestive faculty, O

<sup>3</sup>In an earlier chapter, here omitted.

British Reader, it leads to nothing, and there is no use in it; but rather the reverse, for it costs thee somewhat. Nevertheless, if through this unpromising Horn-gate,<sup>1</sup> Teufelsdröckh, and we by means of him, have led thee into the true Land of Dreams; and through the Clothes-screen, as through a magical *Pierre-Pertuis*,<sup>2</sup> thou lookest, even for moments, into the region of the Wonderful, and seest and feelest that thy daily life is girt with Wonder, and based on Wonder, and thy very blankets and breeches are Miracles,—then art thou profited beyond money's worth; and hast a thankfulness towards our Professor; nay, perhaps in many a literary Tea-circle wilt open thy kind lips, and audibly express that same.

Nay, farther, art thou not too perhaps by this time made aware that all Symbols are properly Clothes; that all Forms whereby Spirit manifests itself to sense, whether outwardly or in the imagination, are Clothes; and thus not only the parchment Magna Charta,<sup>3</sup> which a Tailor was nigh cutting into measures, but the Pomp and Authority of Law, the sacredness of Majesty, and all inferior Worships (Worthships) are properly a Vesture and Raiment; and the Thirty-nine Articles<sup>4</sup> themselves are articles of wearing-apparel (for the Religious Idea)? In which case, must it not also be admitted that this Science of Clothes is a high one, and may with infinitely deeper study on thy part yield richer fruit: that it takes scientific rank beside Codification,<sup>5</sup> and Political Economy, and the Theory of the British Constitution; nay rather, from its prophetic height looks down on all these, as on so many weaving-shops and spinning-mills, where the Vestures which *it* has to fashion, and consecrate and distribute, are, too often by haggard hungry operatives who see no farther than their nose, mechanically woven and spun?

But omitting all this, much more all that concerns Natural Supernaturalism, and indeed whatever has reference to the Ulterior or Transcendental portion of the Science, or bears never so remotely on that promised Volume of the *Palingenesie der menschlichen Gesellschaft* (Newbirth of Society),—we humbly suggest that no province of Clothes-Philosophy, even the lowest, is without its direct value, but that innumerable inferences of a practical nature may be drawn therefrom. To say nothing of those pregnant considerations, ethical, political, symbolical, which crowd on the Clothes-Philosopher from the very threshold of his Science; nothing even of those "architectural ideas,"<sup>6</sup> which, as we have seen, lurk at the bottom of all Modes, and will one day, better unfolding themselves, lead to important revolutions,—let us glance for a moment, and with the faintest light of Clothes-Philosophy, on what may be called the Habitory Class of our fellow-men. Here too overlooking, where so much were to be looked on, the million spinners, weavers, fullers, dyers, washers, and wringers, that puzzle and muddle in their dark recesses, to make us Clothes, and die that we may live,—let us but turn the reader's attention upon two small divisions of mankind, who, like moths, may be regarded as Cloth-animals, creatures that live, move, and have their being in Cloth: we mean, Dandies<sup>7</sup> and Tailors.

In regard to both which small divisions it may be asserted without scruple, that the public feeling, unenlightened by Philosophy, is at fault; and even that the dictates of humanity are violated. As will perhaps abundantly appear to readers of the two following Chapters.

<sup>6</sup>"Neither in tailoring nor in legislating does man proceed by mere Accident, but the hand is ever guided on by mysterious operations of the mind. In all his Modes, and habitory endeavors, an Architectural Idea will be found lurking; his Body and the Cloth are the site and materials whereon and whereby his beautiful edifice, of a Person, is to be built. Whether he flow gracefully out in folded mantles, based on light sandals; tower-up in high head-gear, from amid peaks spangles, and bell-girdles; swell-out in starched ruffs, buckram stuffings, and monstrous tuberosities; or girth himself into separate sections, and front the world an Agglomeration of four limbs,—will depend on the nature of such architectural Idea: whether Grecian, Gothic, Later-Gothic or altogether Modern, and Parisian or Anglo-dandiacal." (*Sartor*, Bk. I, ch. v.)

<sup>7</sup>The period of the dandies in London society was from about 1813 to 1830.

<sup>1</sup>See *Æneid*, VI, 893 and following lines.

<sup>2</sup>In the Bernese Alps; a natural opening in the rock between Tavannes and Sancoz.

<sup>3</sup>The Charter granted by King John at Runnymede, 15 June, 1215. The story Carlyle alludes to is that Sir Robert Cotton (1571–1631), the antiquary, one day found his tailor about to cut up the charter. Cotton bought the document, which is now in the British Museum.

<sup>4</sup>Articles of belief, in the Anglican Church.

<sup>5</sup>The process of reducing laws to a systematic body. The allusion is to Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), whose Utilitarianism was at the time dominant in English thought and a force in practical politics.



## CHAPTER X

## THE DANDIACAL BODY

FIRST, touching Dandies, let us consider, with some scientific strictness, what a Dandy specially is. A Dandy is a Clothes-wearing Man, a Man whose trade, office, and existence consists in the wearing of Clothes. Every faculty of his soul, spirit, purse, and person is heroically consecrated to this one object, the wearing of Clothes wisely and well: so that as others dress to live, he lives to dress. The all-importance of Clothes, which a German Professor, of unequalled learning and acumen, writes his enormous Volume to demonstrate, has sprung up in the intellect of the Dandy without effort, like an instinct of genius; he is inspired with Cloth, a Poet of Cloth. What Teufelsdröckh would call a "Divine Idea of Cloth" is born with him; and this, like other such Ideas, will express itself outwardly, or wring his heart asunder with unutterable throes.

But, like a generous, creative enthusiast, he fearlessly makes his Idea an Action; shows himself in peculiar guise to mankind; walks forth, a witness and living Martyr to the eternal worth of Clothes. We called him a Poet: is not his body the (stuffed) parchment-skin whereon he writes, with cunning Huddersfield dyes, a Sonnet to his mistress' eyebrow?<sup>1</sup> Say, rather, an Epos, and *Clotho Virumque cano*,<sup>2</sup> to the whole world, in Macaronic verses,<sup>3</sup> which he that runs may read. Nay, if you grant, what seems to be admissible, that the Dandy has a Thinking-principle in him, and some notions of Time and Space, is there not in this Life-devotedness to Cloth, in this so willing sacrifice of the Immortal to the Perishable, something (though in reverse order) of that blending and identification of Eternity with Time, which, as we have seen, constitutes the Prophetic character?

And now, for all this perennial Martyrdom, and Poesy, and even Prophecy, what is it that the Dandy asks in return? Solely, we may say, that you would recognize his

existence; would admit him to be a living object; or even failing this, a visual object, or thing that will reflect rays of light. Your silver or your gold (beyond what the niggardly Law has already secured him) he solicits not; simply the glance of your eyes. Understand his mystic significance, or altogether miss and misinterpret it; do but look at him, and he is contented. May we not well cry shame on an ungrateful world, which refuses even this poor boon; which will waste its optic faculty on dried Crocodiles, and Siamese Twins; and over the domestic wonderful wonder of wonders, a live Dandy, glance with hasty indifference, and a scarcely concealed contempt! Him no Zoologist classifies among the Mammalia, no Anatomist dissects with care: when did we see any injected Preparation of the Dandy in our Museums; any specimen of him preserved in spirits? Lord Herringbone may dress himself in a snuff-brown suit, with snuff-brown shirt and shoes: it skills<sup>4</sup> not; the undiscerning public, occupied with grosser wants, passes by regardless on the other side.

The age of Curiosity, like that of Chivalry, is indeed, properly speaking, gone. Yet perhaps only gone to sleep: for here arises the Clothes-Philosophy to resuscitate, strangely enough, both the one and the other! Should sound views of this Science come to prevail, the essential nature of the British Dandy, and the mystic significance that lies in him, cannot always remain hidden under laughable and lamentable hallucination. The following long Extract from Professor Teufelsdröckh may set the matter, if not in its true light, yet in the way towards such. It is to be regretted, however, that here, as so often elsewhere, the Professor's keen philosophic perspicacity is somewhat marred by a certain mixture of almost owlish purblindness, or else of some perverse, ineffectual, ironic tendency; our readers shall judge which:

"In these distracted times," writes he, "when the Religious Principle, driven out of most Churches, either lies unseen in the hearts of good men, looking and longing and silently working there towards some new Revelation; or else wanders homeless over the world, like a disembodied soul seeking its terrestrial organization,—into how many strange shapes, of Superstition and Fanati-

<sup>1</sup>As *You Like It*, II, vii:

"And then the lover  
Sighing like a furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow."

<sup>2</sup>The first line of the *Æneid* begins, *Arma virumque cano*.

<sup>3</sup>Verses written in a mixture of Latin and vernacular words. Macaroni was also a name applied to English dandies in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

<sup>4</sup>Matters.

cism, does it not tentatively and errantly cast itself! The higher Enthusiasm of man's nature is for the while without Exponent; yet does it continue indestructible, unweariedly active, and work blindly in the great chaotic deep: thus Sect after Sect, and Church after Church, bodies itself forth, and melts again into new metamorphosis.

"Chiefly is this observable in England, which, as the wealthiest and worst-instructed of European nations, offers precisely the elements (of Heat, namely, and of Darkness), in which such moon-calves and monstrosities are best generated. Among the newer Sects of that country, one of the most notable, and closely connected with our present subject, is that of the *Dandies*; concerning which, what little information I have been able to procure may fitly stand here.

"It is true, certain of the English Journalists, men generally without sense for the Religious Principle, or judgment for its manifestations, speak, in their brief enigmatic notices, as if this were perhaps rather a Secular Sect, and not a Religious one; nevertheless, to the psychologic eye its devotional and even sacrificial character plainly enough reveals itself. Whether it belongs to the class of Fetish-worships, or of Hero-worships or Polytheisms, or to what other class, may in the present state of our intelligence remain undecided (*schweben*). A certain touch of Manicheism,<sup>1</sup> not indeed in the Gnostic<sup>2</sup> shape, is discernible enough: also (for human Error walks in a cycle, and reappears at intervals) a not-inconsiderable resemblance to that Superstition of the Athos Monks,<sup>3</sup> who by fasting from all nourishment, and looking intensely for a length of time into their own navels, came to discern therein the true Apocalypse of Nature, and Heaven Unveiled. To my own surmise, it appears as if this Dandiacal Sect were but a new modification, adapted to the new time, of that primeval Superstition, *Self-worship*; which Zerdusht,<sup>4</sup> Quang- 45

foutchee,<sup>5</sup> Mahomet, and others, strove rather to subordinate and restrain than to eradicate; and which only in the purer forms of Religion has been altogether rejected. Wherefore, if any one chooses to name it revived Ahrimanism,<sup>6</sup> or a new figure of Demon-Worship, I have, so far as is yet visible, no objection.

"For the rest, these people, animated with the zeal of a new Sect, display courage and perseverance, and what force there is in man's nature, though never so enslaved. They affect great purity and separatism; distinguish themselves by a particular costume (whereof some notices were given in the earlier part of this Volume); likewise, so far as possible, by a particular speech (apparently some broken *Lingua-franca*,<sup>7</sup> or English-French); and, on the whole, strive to maintain a true Nazarene<sup>8</sup> deportment, and keep themselves unspotted from the world.

"They have their Temples, whereof the chief, as the Jewish Temple did, stands in their metropolis; and is named *Almack's*,<sup>9</sup> a word of uncertain etymology. They worship principally by night; and have their Highpriests and Highpriestesses, who, however, do not continue for life. The rites, by some supposed to be of the Menadic<sup>10</sup> sort, or perhaps with an Eleusinian<sup>11</sup> or Cabiric<sup>12</sup> character, are held strictly secret. Nor are Sacred Books wanting to the Sect; these they call *Fashionable Novels*; however, the Canon is not completed, and some are canonical and others not.

"Of such Sacred Books I, not without expense, procured myself some samples; and in hope of true insight, and with the zeal which befits an Inquirer into Clothes, set to interpret and study them. But wholly to

<sup>1</sup>Confucius, an ethical teacher rather than the founder of a religion.

<sup>2</sup>Ahriman was the principle of darkness and evil in the dualism of Zoroaster.

<sup>3</sup>A bastard or hybrid language used by European travelers in the lands at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. Carlyle uses the term in allusion to the habit, fashionable at the time, of using many French terms in English speech.

<sup>4</sup>Native of Nazareth. Carlyle has probably confused the word with Nazarite, the name applied to a Jew living under certain strict vows.

<sup>5</sup>A famous club, or suite of assembly rooms, where fashionable people gathered.

<sup>6</sup>Belonging to the Mænads, attendants on Bacchus.

<sup>7</sup>The Eleusinian mysteries were celebrated at Eleusis in Attica.

<sup>8</sup>The Cabiri were deities worshiped chiefly in Samothrace,

<sup>1</sup>Recognition of two opposed powers in the world, manifesting themselves variously as light and darkness, good and evil, spirit and matter; so named from Mani, or Manes, a Persian.

<sup>2</sup>Because the Gnostics stressed the impurity of matter and the degradation of the body and so would have condemned the creed of the dandy.

<sup>3</sup>Mount Athos is in Macedonia. Monasteries have been there from earliest Christian times.

<sup>4</sup>Zarathustra, or Zoroaster, founder of the Persian religion which is called by his name.

no purpose: that tough faculty of reading, for which the world will not refuse me credit, was here for the first time foiled and set at naught. In vain that I summoned my whole energies (*nich weidlich anstrenge*), and did my very utmost; at the end of some short space, I was uniformly seized with not so much what I can call a drumming in my ears, as a kind of infinite, unsufferable, Jew's-harping and scrannel-piping<sup>1</sup> there; to which the frightfullest species of Magnetic Sleep soon supervened. And if I strove to shake this away, and absolutely would not yield, there came a hitherto unfelt sensation, as of *Delirium Tremens*, and a melting into total deliquium:<sup>2</sup> till at last, by order of the Doctor, dreading ruin to my whole intellectual and bodily faculties, and a general breaking-up of the constitution, I reluctantly but determinedly forbore. Was there some miracle at work here; like those Fire-balls, and super-nal and infernal prodigies, which, in the case of the Jewish Mysteries, have also more than once scared-back the Alien? Be this as it may, such failure on my part, after best efforts, must excuse the imperfection of this sketch; altogether incomplete, yet the completest I could give of a Sect too singular to be omitted.

"Loving my own life and senses as I do, no power shall induce me, as a private individual, to open another *Fashionable Novel*. But luckily, in this dilemma, comes a hand from the clouds; whereby if not victory, deliverance is held out to me. Round one of those Book-packages, which the *Still-schweigen'sche Buchhandlung*<sup>3</sup> is in the habit of importing from England, come, as is usual, various waste printed-sheets (*Maculatur-blätter*), by way of interior wrappage: into these the Clothes-Philosopher, with a certain Mohometan reverence even for waste-paper,<sup>4</sup> where curious knowledge will sometimes hover, disdains not to cast his eye. Readers may judge of his astonishment when on such a defaced stray-sheet, probably the outcast fraction of some English Periodical, such as they name *Magazine*, appears something like

a Dissertation on this very subject of *Fashionable Novels*! It sets out, indeed, chiefly from a Secular point of view; directing itself, not without asperity, against some to me unknown individual named *Pelham*,<sup>5</sup> who seems to be a Mystagogue, and leading Teacher and Preacher of the Sect; so that, what indeed otherwise was not to be expected in such a fugitive fragmentary sheet, the true secret, the Religious physiognomy and physiology of the Dandiical Body, is nowise laid fully open there. Nevertheless, scattered lights do from time to time sparkle out, whereby I have endeavored to profit. Nay, in one passage selected from the Prophecies, or Mythic Theogonies, or whatever they are (for the style seems very mixed) of this Mystagogue, I find what appears to be a Confession of Faith, or Whole Duty of Man, according to the tenets of that Sect. Which Confession or Whole Duty, therefore, as proceeding from a source so authentic, I shall here arrange under Seven distinct Articles, and in very abridged shape lay before the German world; therewith taking leave of this matter. Observe also, that to avoid possibility of error, I, as far as may be, quote literally from the Original:

## ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. Coats should have nothing of the triangle about them; at the same time, wrinkles behind should be carefully avoided.
2. The collar is a very important point: it should be low behind, and slightly rolled.
3. No license of fashion can allow a man of delicate taste to adopt the posterial luxuriance of a Hottentot.
4. There is safety in a swallow-tail.
5. The good sense of a gentleman is nowhere more finely developed than in his rings.
6. It is permitted to mankind, under certain restrictions, to wear white waistcoats.
7. The trousers must be exceedingly tight across the hips.

"All which Propositions I, for the present, content myself with modestly but peremptorily and irrevocably denying.

"In strange contrast with this Dandiical Body stands another British Sect, originally, as I understand, of Ireland, where its chief

<sup>1</sup>See Milton, *Lycidas*, l. 124.

<sup>2</sup>Liquefaction. <sup>3</sup>Bookshop.

<sup>4</sup>"It is the custom of the Mahometans, if they see any printed or written paper on the ground, to take it up and lay it aside carefully, as not knowing but it may contain some piece of their Alcoran."—*Spectator*, No. 85 (MacMechan).

<sup>5</sup>The title of a novel by Bulwer Lytton, published 1828. Passages resembling those which here follow may be found particularly in Chapters 44 and 46.



seat still is; but known also in the main Island, and indeed everywhere rapidly spreading. As this Sect has hitherto emitted no Canonical Books, it remains to me in the same state of obscurity as the Dandiactal, 5 which has published Books that the unassisted human faculties are inadequate to read. The members appear to be designated by a considerable diversity of names, according to their various places of establishment: in England they are generally called the *Drudge Sect*; also, unphilosophically enough, the *White Negroes*; and, chiefly in scorn by those of other communions, the *Ragged-Beggar Sect*. In Scotland, again, I find them entitled *Hallan-shakers*<sup>1</sup> or the *Stook of Duds* Sect; any individual communicant is named *Stook of Duds* (that is, Shock of Rags), in allusion, doubtless, to their professional Costume. While in Ireland, which, as mentioned, is their grand 20 parent hive, they go by a perplexing multiplicity of designations, such as *Bogtrotters*, *Redshanks*, *Ribbonmen*, *Cottiers*, *Peep-of-Day Boys*, *Babes of the Wood*, *Rockites*, *Poor-Slaves*.<sup>2</sup> which last, however, seems to be the 25 primary and generic name; whereto, probably enough, the others are only subsidiary species, or slight varieties; or, at most, propagated offsets from the parent stem, whose minute subdivisions, and shades of difference, 30 it were here loss of time to dwell on. Enough for us to understand, what seems indubitable, that the original Sect is that of the *Poor-Slaves*; whose doctrines, practices, and fundamental characteristics pervade and animate the whole Body, howsoever denominated or outwardly diversified.

"The precise speculative tenets of this Brotherhood: how the Universe, and Man, and Man's Life, picture themselves to the mind 40 of an Irish Poor-Slave; with what feelings and opinions he looks forward on the Future, round on the Present, back on the Past, it were extremely difficult to specify. Something Monastic there appears to be in their 45 Constitution: we find them bound by the two Monastic Vows, of Poverty and Obedience; which Vows, especially the former, it is said, they observe with great strictness; nay, as I have understood it, they are pledged, and 50 be it by any solemn Nazarene ordination or

not, irrevocably consecrated thereto, even before birth. That the third Monastic Vow, of Chastity, is rigidly enforced among them, I find no ground to conjecture.

"Furthermore, they appear to imitate the Dandiactal Sect in their grand principle of wearing a peculiar Costume. Of which Irish Poor-Slave Costume no description will indeed be found in the present Volume; for 10 this reason, that by the imperfect organ of Language it did not seem describable. Their raiment consists of innumerable shirts, lap-pets,<sup>3</sup> and irregular wings, of all cloths and of all colors; through the labyrinthic intricacies of which their bodies are introduced by some unknown process. It is fastened together by a multiplex combination of buttons, thrums,<sup>4</sup> and skewers; to which frequently is added a girdle of leather, of hempen or even 20 of straw rope, round the loins. To straw rope, indeed, they seem partial, and often wear it by way of sandals. In head-dress they affect a certain freedom: hats with partial brim, without crown, or with only a loose, hinged, or valve crown; in the former case, they sometimes invert the hat, and wear it brim uppermost, like a University-cap, with what view is unknown.

"The name Poor-Slaves seems to indicate a Slavonic, Polish, or Russian origin: not so, however, the interior essence and spirit of their Superstition, which rather displays a Teutonic or Druidical character. One might fancy them worshipers of Hertha,<sup>5</sup> or the Earth: for they dig and affectionately work continually in her bosom; or else, shut-up in private Oratories,<sup>6</sup> meditate and manipulate the substances derived from her; seldom looking-up towards the Heavenly Luminaries, 40 and then with comparative indifference. Like the Druids, on the other hand, they live in dark dwellings; often even breaking their glass-windows, where they find such, and stuffing them up with pieces of raiment, or other opaque substances, till the fit obscurity is restored. Again, like all followers of Nature-Worship, they are liable to out-breakings of an enthusiasm rising to ferocity; and burn men, if not in wicker idols, yet in sod cottages.

"In respect of diet, they have also their observances. All Poor-Slaves are Rhizoph-

<sup>1</sup>Sturdy beggars.

<sup>2</sup>All names given to the poor and rebellious Irish in the early nineteenth century.

<sup>3</sup>Folds.

<sup>4</sup>Loose threads.

<sup>5</sup>Germanic goddess of fertility, mentioned by Tacitus.

<sup>6</sup>Factories.

gous (or Root-eaters); a few are Ichthyophagous,<sup>1</sup> and use Salted Herrings: other animal food they abstain from; except indeed, with perhaps some strange inverted fragment of a Brahminical feeling, such animals as die a natural death.<sup>2</sup> Their universal sustenance is the root named Potato, cooked by fire alone; and generally without condiment or relish of any kind, save an unknown condiment named *Point*, into the meaning of which I have vainly inquired; the victual *Potatoes-and-Point*<sup>3</sup> not appearing, at least not with specific accuracy of description, in any European Cookery-Book whatever. For drink, they use, with an almost epigrammatic counterpoise of taste, Milk, which is the mildest of liquors, and *Poheen*,<sup>4</sup> which is the fiercest. This latter I have tasted, as well as the English *Blue-Ruin*, and the Scotch *Whisky*, analogous fluids used by the Sect in those countries: it evidently contains some form of alcohol, in the highest state of concentration, though disguised with acrid oils; and is, on the whole, the most pungent substance known to me,—indeed, a perfect liquid fire. In all their Religious Solemnities, *Poheen* is said to be an indispensable requisite, and largely consumed.

“An Irish Traveler, of perhaps common veracity, who presents himself under the to me unmeaning title of *The late John Bernard*, offers the following sketch<sup>5</sup> of a domestic establishment, the inmates whereof, though such is not stated expressly, appear to have been of that Faith. Thereby shall my German readers now behold an Irish Poor-Slave, as it were with their own eyes; and even see him at meat. Moreover, in the so precious waste-paper sheet above mentioned, I have found some corresponding picture of a Dandiacal Household, painted by that same Dandiacal Mystagogue, or Theogonist: this also, by way of counterpart and contrast, the world shall look into.

“First, therefore, of the Poor-Slave, who

appears likewise to have been a species of Innkeeper. I quote from the original:

#### POOR-SLAVE HOUSEHOLD

The furniture of this Caravansera consisted of a large iron Pot, two oaken Tables, two Benches, two Chairs, and a *Poheen Noggin*.<sup>6</sup> There was a Loft above (attainable by a ladder), upon which the inmates slept; and the space below was divided by a hurdle into two Apartments; the one for their cow and pig, the other for themselves and guests. On entering the house we discovered the family, eleven in number, at dinner: the father sitting at the top, the mother at the bottom, the children on each side, of a large oaken Board, which was scooped-out in the middle, like a trough, to receive the contents of their Pot of Potatoes. Little holes were cut at equal distances to contain Salt; and a bowl of Milk stood on the table: all the luxuries of meat and beer, bread, knives, and dishes were dispensed with.

The Poor-Slave himself our Traveler found, as he says, broad-backed, black-browed, of great personal strength, and mouth from ear to ear. His Wife was a sun-browned but well-featured woman; and his young ones, bare and chubby, had the appetite of ravens. Of their Philosophical or Religious tenets or observances, no notice or hint.

“But now, secondly, of the Dandiacal Household; in which, truly, that often-mentioned Mystagogue and inspired Penman himself has his abode:

#### DANDIACAL HOUSEHOLD

A Dressing-room splendidly furnished; violet-colored curtains, chairs and ottomans of the same hue. Two full-length Mirrors are placed, one on each side of a table, which supports the luxuries of the Toilet. Several Bottles of Perfumes, arranged in a peculiar fashion, stand upon a smaller table of mother-of-pearl: opposite to these are placed the appurtenances of Lavation richly wrought in frosted silver. A wardrobe of Buhl<sup>7</sup> is on the left; the doors of which, being partly open, discover a profusion of Clothes; Shoes of a singularly small size monopolize the lower shelves. Fronting the wardrobe a door ajar gives some slight glimpse of a Bathroom. Folding-doors in the background.—Enter the Author [our Theogonist in person] obsequiously preceded by a French Valet, in white silk Jacket and cambric Apron.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fish-eaters.

<sup>2</sup>The Brahmins do not permit themselves to kill any animals or insects.

<sup>3</sup>*I. e.*, potatoes and nothing besides; bacon or herring, if there was any, being simply pointed at, not eaten, because there was not enough to go round.

<sup>4</sup>“Moonshine” whisky.

<sup>5</sup>Condensed from several paragraphs (Vol. I, pp. 348–350) in *Retrospections of the Stage* by John Bernard, published in 1830.

<sup>6</sup>Small mug.

<sup>7</sup>Cabinetwork inlaid with tortoise-shell or metal.

<sup>8</sup>Quoted, with a few minor changes, from the introduction to Bulwer Lytton's novel, *The Disowned*.



"Such are the two Sects which, at this moment, divide the more unsettled portion of the British People; and agitate that ever-vexed country. To the eye of the political Seer, their mutual relation, pregnant with the elements of discord and hostility, is far from consoling. These two principles of Dandiacal Self-worship or Demon-worship, and Poor-Slavish or Drudgical Earth-worship, or whatever that same Drudgism may be, do as yet indeed manifest themselves under distant and nowise considerable shapes: nevertheless, in their roots and subterranean ramifications, they extend through the entire structure of Society, and work unweariedly in the secret depths of English national Existence; striving to separate and isolate it into two contradictory, uncommunicating masses.

"In numbers, and even individual strength, the Poor-Slaves or Drudges, it would seem, are hourly increasing. The Dandiacal, again, is by nature no proselytizing Sect; but it boasts of great hereditary resources, and is strong by union; whereas the Drudges, split into parties, have as yet no rallying-point; or at best only co-operate by means of partial secret affiliations. If, indeed, there were to arise a *Communion of Drudges*, as there is already a *Communion of Saints*, what strangest effects would follow therefrom! Dandyism as yet affects to look-down on Drudgism: but perhaps the hour of trial, when it will be practically seen which ought to look down, and which up, is not so distant.

"To me it seems probable that the two Sects will one day part England between them; each recruiting itself from the intermediate ranks, till there be none left to enlist on either side. Those Dandiacal Manicheans, with the host of Dandyising Christians, will form one body: the Drudges, gathering round them whosoever is Drudgical, be he Christian or Infidel Pagan; sweeping-up likewise all manner of Utilitarians, Radicals, refractory Potwallopers,<sup>1</sup> and so forth, into their general mass, will form another. I could liken Dandyism and Drudgism to two bottomless boiling Whirlpools that had broken-out on opposite quarters of the firm land: as yet

they appear only disquieted, foolishly bubbling wells, which man's art might cover-in; yet mark them, their diameter is daily widening: they are hollow Cones that boil-up from the infinite Deep, over which your firm land is but a thin crust or rind! Thus daily is the intermediate land crumbling-in, daily the empire of the two Buchan-Bullers<sup>2</sup> extending; till now there is but a foot-plank, a mere film of Land between them; this too is washed away: and then—we have the true Hell of Waters, and Noah's Deluge is outdeluged!

"Or better, I might call them two boundless, and indeed unexampled Electric Machines (turned by the 'Machinery of Society'), with batteries of opposite quality; Drudgism the Negative, Dandyism the Positive: one attracts hourly towards it and appropriates all the Positive Electricity of the nation (namely, the Money thereof); the other is equally busy with the Negative (that is to say the Hunger), which is equally potent. Hitherto you see only partial transient sparkles and sputters: but wait a little, till the entire nation is in an electric state; till your whole vital Electricity, no longer healthfully Neutral, is cut into two isolated portions of Positive and Negative (of Money and of Hunger); and stands there bottled-up in two World-Batteries! The stirring of a child's finger brings the two together; and then—What then? The Earth is but shivered into impalpable smoke by that Doom's-thunderpeal; the Sun misses one of his Planets in Space, and thenceforth there are no eclipses of the Moon.—Or better still, I might liken"—

Oh! enough, enough of likenings and similitudes; in excess of which, truly, it is hard to say whether Teufelsdröckh or ourselves sin the more.

We have often blamed him for a habit of wire-drawing and over-refining; from of old we have been familiar with his tendency to Mysticism and Religiosity, whereby in everything he was still scenting-out Religion: but never perhaps did these amaurosis-suffusions<sup>3</sup> so cloud and distort his otherwise most piercing vision, as in this of the *Dandiacal Body!* Or was there something of intended satire; is the Professor and Seer not quite the blinkard

<sup>1</sup>One who boils a pot, *i. e.*, who prepares his own food. The name was applied to a certain class of voters in England before the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832—those who had resided in a borough for six months and had not been given poor-relief for twelve.

<sup>2</sup>The name of a well, or whirlpool enclosed in a rocky recess, six miles south of Peterhead on the Aberdeenshire coast.

<sup>3</sup>Amaurosis is a form of blindness.



he affects to be? Of an ordinary mortal we should have decisively answered in the affirmative; but with a Teufelsdröckh there ever hovers some shade of doubt. In the mean while, if satire were actually intended, the case is little better. There are not wanting men who will answer: Does your Professor take us for simpletons? His irony has overshoot itself; we see through it, and perhaps through him.

## CHAPTER XI

### TAILORS

THUS, however, has our first Practical Inference from the Clothes-Philosophy, that which respects Dandies, been sufficiently drawn, and we come now to the second, concerning Tailors. On this latter our opinion happily quite coincides with that of Teufelsdröckh himself, as expressed in the concluding page of his Volume, to whom, therefore, we willingly give place. Let him speak his own last words, in his own way:

"Upwards of a century," says he, "must elapse, and still the bleeding fight of Freedom be fought, whoso is noblest perishing in the van, and thrones be hurled on altars like Pelion on Ossa,<sup>1</sup> and the Moloch<sup>2</sup> of Iniquity have his victims, and the Michael of Justice<sup>3</sup> his martyrs, before Tailors can be admitted to their true prerogatives of manhood, and this last wound of suffering Humanity be closed.

"If aught in the history of the world's blindness could surprise us, here might we indeed pause and wonder. An idea has gone abroad, and fixed itself down into a wide-spreading rooted error, that Tailors are a distinct species in Physiology, not Men, but fractional Parts of a Man.<sup>3</sup> Call any one a *Schneider* (Cutter, Tailor), is it not, in our dislocated, hoodwinked, and indeed delirious condition of Society, equivalent to defying his perpetual fellest enmity? The epithet *schneider mässig* (tailor-like) betokens an otherwise unapproachable degree of pusillanimity: we introduce a *Tailor's-Melancholy*,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mountains in Thessaly, the former of which the Titans were fabled to have piled on the latter in an effort to reach the abode of the gods.

<sup>2</sup>God of the Ammonites who was worshiped with human sacrifices.

<sup>3</sup>According to a proverb of uncertain origin, "nine tailors make a man."

<sup>4</sup>See Lamb's essay *On the Melancholy of Tailors*. Lamb discusses the influence of cabbage.

more opprobrious than any Leprosy, into our Books of Medicine; and fable I know not what of his generating it by living on Cabbage. Why should I speak of Hans Sachs<sup>5</sup> (himself a Shoemaker, or kind of Leather-Tailor), with his *Schneider mit dem Panier*?<sup>6</sup> Why of Shakespeare, in his *Taming of the Shrew*, and elsewhere? Does it not stand on record that the English Queen Elizabeth, receiving a deputation of Eighteen Tailors, addressed them with a 'Good morning, gentlemen both!' Did not the same virago boast that she had a Cavalry Regiment, whereof neither horse nor man could be injured; her Regiment, namely, of Tailors on Mares? Thus everywhere is the falsehood taken for granted, and acted on as an indisputable fact.

\* "Nevertheless, need I put the question to any Physiologist, whether it is disputable or not? Seems it not at least presumable, that, under his Clothes, the Tailor has bones and viscera, and other muscles than the sartorius? Which function of manhood is the Tailor not conjectured to perform? Can he not arrest for debt? Is he not in most countries a tax-paying animal?

"To no reader of this Volume can it be doubtful which conviction is mine. Nay if the fruit of these long vigils, and almost preternatural Inquiries, is not to perish utterly, the world will have approximated towards a higher Truth; and the doctrine, which Swift,<sup>7</sup> with the keen forecast of genius, dimly anticipated, will stand revealed in clear light: that the Tailor is not only a Man, but something of a Creator or Divinity. Of Franklin it was said, that 'he snatched the Thunder from Heaven and the Scepter from Kings';<sup>8</sup> but which is greater, I would ask, he that lends, or he that snatches? For, looking away from individual cases, and how a Man is by the Tailor new-created into a Nobleman, and clothed not only with Wool but with Dignity and a Mystic Dominion,—is not the fair fabric of Society itself, with all its royal mantles and pontifical stoles, whereby, from nakedness and dismemberment, we are organized into Politics, into nations, and a whole co-operating Mankind, the creation,

<sup>5</sup>German poet and Meistersinger (1494-1576).

<sup>6</sup>Tailor with the Flag.

<sup>7</sup>See *A Tale of a Tub*, Sec. II. This probably suggested to Carlyle the idea of writing a philosophy of clothes.

<sup>8</sup>This is ascribed to Turgot.

as has here been often irrefragably evinced, of the Tailor alone?—What too are all Poets and moral Teachers, but a species of Metaphorical Tailors? Touching which high Guild the greatest living Guild-brother has triumphantly asked us: ‘Nay if thou wilt have it, who but the Poet first made Gods for men; brought them down to us; and raised us up to them?’<sup>1</sup>

“And this is he, whom sitting downcast, on the hard basis of his Shopboard, the world treats with contumely, as the ninth part of a man! Look up, thou much-injured one, look up with the kindling eye of hope, and prophetic bodings of a noble better time. Too long hast thou sat there, on crossed legs, wearing thy ankle-joints to horn; like some sacred Anchorite, or Catholic Fakir, doing penance, drawing down Heaven’s richest blessings, for a world that scoffed at thee. Be of hope! Already streaks of blue peer through our clouds; the thick gloom of Ignorance is rolling asunder, and it will be Day. Mankind will repay with interest their long-accumulated debt: the Anchorite that was scoffed at will be worshiped; the Fraction will become not an Integer only, but a Square and Cube. With astonishment the world will recognize that the Tailor is its Hierophant and Hierarch, or even its God.

“As I stood in the Mosque of St. Sophia,<sup>2</sup> and looked upon these Four-and-Twenty Tailors, sewing and embroidering that rich

Cloth, which the Sultan sends yearly for the Caaba of Mecca,<sup>3</sup> I thought within myself: How many other Unholies has your covering Art made holy, besides this Arabian Whinstone!

“Still more touching was it when, turning the corner of a lane, in the Scottish Town of Edinburgh, I came upon a Signpost, whereon stood written that such and such a one was ‘Breeches-Maker to his Majesty’; and stood painted the Effigies of a Pair of Leather Breeches, and between the knees these memorable words, SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.<sup>4</sup> Was not this the martyr prison-speech of a Tailor sighing indeed in bonds, yet sighing towards deliverance, and prophetically appealing to a better day? A day of justice, when the worth of Breeches would be revealed to man, and the Scissors become for ever venerable.

“Neither, perhaps, may I now say, has his appeal been altogether in vain. It was in this high moment, when the soul, rent, as it were, and shed asunder, is open to inspiring influence, that I first conceived this Work on Clothes: the greatest I can ever hope to do; which has already, after long retardations, occupied, and will yet occupy, so large a section of my Life; and of which the Primary and simpler Portion may here find its conclusion.”

<sup>2</sup>The Caaba is a square building in the mosque at Mecca. In its northwest corner a black stone is let into the wall (“this Arabian whinstone”) which is supposed to have been the original god of the natives of Mecca. This stone is an object of veneration for all Mahometans.

<sup>4</sup>Thus one goes to the stars—i.e., this is the way to immortality (*Æneid*, IX, 641).

<sup>1</sup>Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, ii, 2.

<sup>2</sup>In Constantinople.

## THOMAS BABINGTON, LORD MACAULAY (1800-1859)

Macaulay was born at the country-house of his father's brother-in-law, in Leicestershire; on 25 October, 1800 (the anniversary of the battle of Agincourt). His first two years were passed in Birchin Lane, which runs between Cornhill and Lombard Street, in the very heart of the City, in a house which was also his father's place of business. His father, Zachary, was prosperous until late in life when, in order to devote all of his attention to philanthropic causes (chiefly the abolition of slavery), he entrusted the details of his business to an incompetent partner. At the end of Macaulay's second year his parents took a house in the High Street of Clapham, and there his boyhood was spent. From the age of three he read incessantly, and talked most remarkably in "book words," without, however, the slightest affectation. At seven he began a compendium of universal history, and at eight he wrote a treatise intended to convert the natives of Malabar to Christianity. He was neither a prig nor spoiled; "a more simple and natural child never lived, or a more lively and merry one"; he was simply extraordinary. And his memory was of a piece with his interests and development. In 1853 he was able to repeat a scrap from the "poet's corner" of a country newspaper of 1813 which he had never recalled in the interval. He thought that, if every copy had been lost, he could have reproduced in their entirety, from memory, both *Paradise Lost* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In 1812 he was sent to a school at Little Shelford, near Cambridge, and in 1818 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. There he did not win honors commensurate with his abilities because mathematical studies were totally repugnant to him; but in the autumn of 1824 he was elected a fellow of Trinity (after two previous failures to win the post). He had then already begun his literary career, by contributing an article (1823) to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, and he was presently asked to write for the *Edinburgh Review*. His first article for that quarterly—his essay on Milton—appeared in August, 1825, and won him a secure place amongst its contributors, which he was to hold for twenty years, until absorption in his *History* forced him to abandon essay-writing. He became, in fact, the mainstay of the *Review*, quickly winning a great popular reputation by his lucid and brilliant compositions.

Meanwhile he was living with his family in

London, was called to the bar in 1826, and in 1829 took chambers in Gray's Inn. It is said, however, that he never had more than one case to plead; and, indeed, his eyes were directed, not towards a legal, but towards a political career. He had left Cambridge a complete Whig, and throughout his life he remained "pretty much convinced that all but Whigs were fools." He entered Parliament in 1830, and soon made a profound impression on his colleagues, though he never became a finished orator nor a ready debater, and was always physically clumsy—never, for example, learning how to tie his neckcloth properly and never being able to shave himself well. Shortly after 1830, the expiration of his fellowship and the loss of a public office he had held since 1828 reduced him to such straits that he had to sell the gold medals he had won as a student; but he contracted no debts, and in 1833 obtained the means to establish himself securely for the remainder of his life. For he was then offered a seat on the newly formed supreme council of India, with a salary of £10,000 the year for five years. He accepted the post and sailed for India with his sister Hannah in February, 1834, remaining there (chiefly at Calcutta) until 1838. During this time his industry was extraordinary, and he played an active part in founding the educational system of India, and compiled, almost without help, the Indian criminal code and the code of criminal procedure. With his earnings he aided his father (who had in the 1820's lost all of his money) and secured for himself a comfortable income, which was increased by a legacy of £10,000 from an uncle. In the autumn of 1838 he traveled in Italy, and in the following spring began to work at his *History*.

But the rival attractions of politics soon turned him aside once more from literature, and during the greater part of the next fifteen years he sat in Parliament, and also held, for a time, a cabinet-post. In 1842 he published the *Lays of Ancient Rome*, and in 1843 his collected *Essays*. The latter he collected against his wish, because they had several times been reprinted in America and were being imported in large quantities into England. "I know," he said, "that these pieces are full of faults, and that their popularity has been very far beyond their merit. . . . Their natural life is only six weeks." And after their publication he wrote: "My collected reviews have



succeeded well. . . . In spite, however, of the applause and of the profit, neither of which I despise, I am sorry that it had become necessary to republish these papers. There are few of them which I read with satisfaction." This should be remembered. The *Essays* have deserved their popularity, but they are very unequal, not so much in brilliancy, vivacity, and finish, as in adequacy to their subjects. They are not, as is often supposed, remarkable for wide or exact knowledge; and some of them are gravely misleading. The worst of them all, as practically every qualified judge has agreed, is the essay on Bacon; and of the essay on Milton Macaulay discerningly said that it contained scarcely a paragraph which did not demand revision.

Macaulay's powers, in fact, found their full scope only in his *History of England from the Accession of James the Second*; and only in the *History* did he fully succeed in combining wide, deep, and accurate scholarship with his prodigious capacity to paint a life-like picture and tell a moving story. In 1841 he wrote: "I shall not be satisfied unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." This he did; but, had it been his only aim, he could have achieved it more cheaply. It is his chief title to fame that "to extraordinary fluency and facility he united patient, minute, and persistent diligence," which enabled him to produce the only literary work in the English language comparable to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Detractors have characterized the *History* as a monument of Victorian Philistinism, and as a piece of Whig propaganda; but neither charge has been helpful to the cause of just critical

evaluation. No one, for example, can read his account of the siege of Londonderry, in which he did for that city "what Thucydides had done for Plataea," without concluding that if this is Victorian Philistinism we want more of it. And Sir Charles Firth finally disposed of all that was serious in the other charge when he testified that "a close scrutiny of Macaulay's pages, while it made some defects and omissions more apparent, had increased, not diminished, his admiration for what Macaulay succeeded in doing."

The first two volumes of the *History* were published in December, 1848. In the following spring Macaulay delivered his address as Lord Rector of Glasgow University. In June he was offered the Regius Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge, but refused even to consider taking a post which offered him little in return for the sacrifice of his freedom, and which would have made the continuation of his *History* more difficult. But difficulties were to come, nevertheless; for in 1852 his health broke down in a serious failure of his heart, and thereafter he was practically an invalid. He grew twenty years older in a week, he said. However, he worked on as best he could, publishing his collected *Speeches* in 1854 to protect himself against a piratical edition, and publishing the third and fourth volumes of the *History* in December, 1855. The fifth volume he left not quite complete at his death, and it was not published until March, 1861. It carried the narrative to the death of William III (8 March, 1702). Meanwhile Macaulay had become Baron Macaulay of Rothley in 1857, and on 28 December, 1859, had died. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the poet's corner, at the foot of the statue of Addison.

## THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES THE SECOND CHAPTER XII<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

THE voyage was safely and quietly performed; and, on the afternoon of the twelfth of March, James landed in the harbor of Kinsale. By the Roman Catholic population he was received with shouts of unfeigned transport. The few Protestants who re-

mained in that part of the country joined in greeting him, and perhaps not insincerely. For, though an enemy of their religion, he was not an enemy of their nation; and they might reasonably hope that the worst king would show somewhat more respect for law and property than had been shown by the Merry Boys and Rapparees. The Vicar of Kinsale was among those who went to pay their duty: he was presented by the Bishop of Chester, and was not ungraciously received.

<sup>1</sup>The passage here printed comprises roughly the latter two-thirds of the chapter, and concerns the unavailing effort of James II (in 1689) to regain the English throne, with French aid, by leading a revolt in Ireland. Macaulay's notes, which throughout this passage contain merely references to his sources, have been omitted.

James learned that his cause was prospering. In the three southern provinces of Ireland the Protestants were disarmed, and were so effectually bowed down by terror that he had nothing to apprehend from them. In the North there was some show of resistance: but Hamilton was marching against the mal-

contents; and there was little doubt that they would easily be crushed. A day was spent at Kinsale in putting the arms and ammunition out of reach of danger. Horses sufficient to carry a few travelers were with some difficulty procured; and, on the fourteenth of March, James proceeded to Cork.

We should greatly err if we imagined that the road by which he entered that city bore any resemblance to the stately approach which strikes the traveler of the nineteenth century with admiration. At present Cork, though deformed by many miserable relics of a former age, holds no mean place among the ports of the empire. The shipping is more than half what the shipping of London was at the time of the Revolution. The customs exceed the whole revenue which the whole kingdom of Ireland, in the most peaceful and prosperous times, yielded to the Stuar-  
 ts. The town is adorned by broad and well built streets, by fair gardens, by a Corinthian portico which would do honor to Palladio, and by a Gothic college worthy to stand in the High Street of Oxford. In 1689, the city extended over about one tenth part of the space which it now covers, and was intersected by muddy streams, which have long been concealed by arches and buildings. A desolate marsh, in which the sportsman who pursued the waterfowl sank deep in water and mire at every step, covered the area now occupied by stately buildings, the palaces of great commercial societies. There was only a single street in which two wheeled carriages could pass each other. From this street diverged to right and left alleys squalid and noisome beyond the belief of those who have formed their notions of misery from the most miserable parts of Saint Giles's and White-chapel. One of these alleys, called, and, by comparison, justly called, Broad Lane, is about ten feet wide. From such places, now seats of hunger and pestilence, abandoned to the most wretched of mankind, the citizens poured forth to welcome James. He was received with military honors by Macarthy, who held the chief command in Munster.

It was impossible for the King to proceed immediately to Dublin; for the southern counties had been so completely laid waste by the banditti whom the priests had called to arms, that the means of locomotion were not easily to be procured. Horses had be-

come rarities: in a large district there were only two carts; and those Avaux<sup>1</sup> pronounced good for nothing. Some days elapsed before the money which had been brought from France, though no very formidable mass, could be dragged over the few miles which separated Cork from Kinsale.

While the King and his Council were employed in trying to procure carriages and beasts, Tyrconnel<sup>2</sup> arrived from Dublin. He held encouraging language. The opposition of Enniskillen he seems to have thought deserving of little consideration. Londonderry, he said, was the only important post held by the Protestants; and even Londonderry would not, in his judgment, hold out many days.

At length James was able to leave Cork for the capital. On the road, the shrewd and observant Avaux made many remarks. The first part of the journey was through wild highlands, where it was not strange that there should be few traces of art and industry. But, from Kilkenny to the gates of Dublin, the path of the travelers lay over gently undulating ground rich with natural verdure. That fertile district should have been covered with flocks and herds, orchards and cornfields: but it was an untilled and unpeopled desert. Even in the towns the artisans were very few. Manufactured articles were hardly to be found, and if found could be procured only at immense prices. The envoy at first attributed the desolation which he saw on every side to the tyranny of the English colonists. In a very short time he was forced to change his opinion.

James received on his progress numerous marks of the goodwill of the peasantry; but marks such as, to men bred in the courts of France and England, had an uncouth and ominous appearance. Though very few laborers were seen at work in the fields, the road was lined by Rapparees armed with skeans, stakes, and half pikes, who crowded to look upon the deliverer of their race. The

<sup>1</sup>The French ambassador who accompanied James on his expedition. He was an experienced and able diplomatist, though Macaulay adds that "of the difference between right and wrong he had no more notion than a brute. . . . Nothing that tended to promote the interest of the French monarchy seemed to him a crime."

<sup>2</sup>Richard Talbot, who came of a Norman family long settled in Ireland. In return for infamous services, James had made him Earl of Tyrconnel and, in 1687, Lord Deputy of Ireland. He was now the *de facto* ruler of a large portion of the island and, because it served his own ends, faithful to the cause of James.

highway along which he traveled presented the aspect of a street in which a fair is held. Pipers came forth to play before him in a style which was not exactly that of the French opera; and the villagers danced wildly to the music. Long frieze mantles, resembling those which Spenser had, a century before, described as meet beds for rebels and apt cloaks for thieves, were spread along the path which the cavalcade was to tread; and garlands, in which cabbage stalks supplied the place of laurels, were offered to the royal hand. The women insisted on kissing his Majesty; but it should seem that they bore little resemblance to their posterity; for this compliment was so distasteful to him that he ordered his retinue to keep them at a distance.

On the twenty-fourth of March he entered Dublin. That city was then, in extent and population, the second in the British isles. It contained between six and seven thousand houses, and probably above thirty thousand inhabitants. In wealth and beauty, however, Dublin was inferior to many English towns. Of the graceful and stately public buildings which now adorn both sides of the Liffey scarcely one had been even projected. The College, a very different edifice from that which now stands on the same site, lay quite out of the city. The ground which is at present occupied by Leinster House and Charlemont House, by Sackville Street and Merrion Square, was open meadow. Most of the dwellings were built of timber, and have long given place to more substantial edifices. The Castle had in 1686 been almost uninhabitable. Clarendon had complained that he knew of no gentleman in Pall Mall who was not more conveniently and handsomely lodged than the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. No public ceremony could be performed in a becoming manner under the Viceregal roof. Nay, in spite of constant glazing and tiling, the rain perpetually drenched the apartments. Tyrconnel, since he became Lord Deputy, had erected a new building somewhat more commodious. To this building the King was conducted in state through the southern part of the city. Every exertion had been made to give an air of festivity and splendor to the district which he was to traverse. The streets, which were generally deep in mud, were strewn with gravel. Boughs and flowers were scattered

over the path. Tapestry and arras hung from the windows of those who could afford to exhibit such finery. The poor supplied the place of rich stuffs with blankets and coverlids. In one place was stationed a troop of friars with a cross; in another a company of forty girls dressed in white and carrying nosegays. Pipers and harpers played "The King shall enjoy his own again." The Lord Deputy carried the sword of state before his master. The Judges, the Heralds, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, appeared in all the pomp of office. Soldiers were drawn up on the right and left to keep the passages clear. A procession of twenty coaches belonging to public functionaries was mustered. Before the Castle gate, the King was met by the host under a canopy borne by four bishops of his church. At the sight he fell on his knees, and passed some time in devotion. He then rose and was conducted to the chapel of his palace, once—such are the vicissitudes of human things—the riding house of Henry Cromwell. A *Te Deum* was performed in honor of his Majesty's arrival. The next morning he held a Privy Council, discharged Chief Justice Keating from any further attendance at the board, ordered Avaux and Bishop Cartwright to be sworn in, and issued a proclamation convoking a Parliament to meet at Dublin on the seventh of May.

When the news that James had arrived in Ireland reached London, the sorrow and alarm were general, and were mingled with serious discontent. The multitude, not making sufficient allowance for the difficulties by which William was encompassed on every side, loudly blamed his neglect. To all the invectives of the ignorant and malicious he opposed, as was his wont, nothing but immutable gravity and the silence of profound disdain. But few minds had received from nature a temper so firm as his; and still fewer had undergone so long and so rigorous a discipline. The reproaches which had no power to shake his fortitude, tried from childhood upwards by both extremes of fortune, inflicted a deadly wound on a less resolute heart.

While all the coffeehouses were unanimously resolving that a fleet and army ought to have been long before sent to Dublin, and wondering how so renowned a politician as his Majesty could have been duped by Hamilton and



Tyrconnel, a gentleman went down to the Temple Stairs, called a boat, and desired to be pulled to Greenwich. He took the cover of a letter from his pocket, scratched a few lines with a pencil, and laid the paper on the seat with some silver for his fare. As the boat passed under the dark central arch of London Bridge, he sprang into the water and disappeared. It was found that he had written these words: "My folly in undertaking what I could not execute hath done the King great prejudice which cannot be stopped—No easier way for me than this—May his undertaking prosper—May he have a blessing." There was no signature; but the body was soon found, and proved to be that of John Temple. He was young and highly accomplished: he was heir to an honorable name; he was united to an amiable woman: he was possessed of an ample fortune; and he had in prospect the greatest honors of the state. It does not appear that the public had been at all aware to what an extent he was answerable for the policy which had brought so much obloquy on the government. The King, stern as he was, had far too great a heart to treat an error as a crime. He had just appointed the unfortunate young man Secretary at War; and the commission was actually preparing. It is not improbable that the cold magnanimity of the master was the very thing which made the remorse of the servant insupportable.

But, great as were the vexations which William had to undergo, those by which the temper of his father-in-law<sup>1</sup> was at this time tried were greater still. No court in Europe was distracted by more quarrels and intrigues than were to be found within the walls of Dublin Castle. The numerous petty cabals which sprang from the cupidity, the jealousy, and the malevolence of individuals scarcely deserve mention. But there was one cause of discord which has been too little noticed, and which is the key to much that has been thought mysterious in the history of those times.

Between English Jacobitism and Irish Jacobitism there was nothing in common. The English Jacobite was animated by a strong enthusiasm for the family of Stuart; and in his zeal for the interests of that family he too

often forget the interests of the state. Victory, peace, prosperity, seemed evils to the stanch nonjuror of our island if they tended to make usurpation popular and permanent. Defeat, bankruptcy, famine, invasion, were, in his view, public blessings, if they increased the chance of a restoration. He would rather have seen his country the last of the nations under James the Second or James the Third, than the mistress of the sea, the umpire between contending potentates, the seat of arts, the hive of industry, under a prince of the House of Nassau or of Brunswick.

The sentiments of the Irish Jacobite were very different, and, it must in candor be acknowledged, were of a nobler character. The fallen dynasty was nothing to him. He had not, like a Cheshire or Shropshire cavalier, been taught from his cradle to consider loyalty to that dynasty as the first duty of a Christian and a gentleman. All his family traditions, all the lessons taught him by his foster mother and by his priests, had been of a very different tendency. He had been brought up to regard the foreign sovereigns of his native land with the feeling with which the Jew regarded Cæsar, with which the Scot regarded Edward the First, with which the Castilian regarded Joseph Bonaparte, with which the Pole regards the Autocrat of the Russias. It was the boast of the high-born Milesian that, from the twelfth century to the seventeenth, every generation of his family had been in arms against the English crown. His remote ancestors had contended with Fitzstephen and De Burgh. His great-grandfather had cloven down the soldiers of Elizabeth in the battle of the Blackwater. His grandfather had conspired with O'Donnel against James the First. His father had fought under Sir Phelim O'Neil against Charles the First. The confiscation of the family estate had been ratified by an Act of Charles the Second. No Puritan, who had been cited before the High Commission by Laud, who had charged by the side of Cromwell at Naseby, who had been prosecuted under the Conventicle Act, and who had been in hiding on account of the Rye House Plot, bore less affection to the House of Stuart than the O'Haras and Macmahons, on whose support the fortunes of that House now seemed to depend.

The fixed purpose of these men was to

<sup>1</sup>James II. His daughter, Mary, had become the wife of William of Orange.

break the foreign yoke, to exterminate the Saxon colony, to sweep away the Protestant Church, and to restore the soil to its ancient proprietors. To obtain these ends they would without the smallest scruple have risen up against James; and to obtain these ends they rose up for him. The Irish Jacobites, therefore, were not at all desirous that he should again reign at Whitehall: for they were perfectly aware that a Sovereign of Ireland, who was also Sovereign of England, would not, and, even if he would, could not, long administer the government of the smaller and poorer kingdom in direct opposition to the feeling of the larger and richer. Their real wish was that the Crowns might be completely separated, and that their island might, whether with James or without James they cared little, form a distinct state under the powerful protection of France.

While one party in the Council at Dublin regarded James merely as a tool to be employed for achieving the deliverance of Ireland, another party regarded Ireland merely as a tool to be employed for effecting the restoration of James. To the English and Scotch lords and gentlemen who had accompanied him from Brest, the island in which they now sojourned was merely a stepping stone by which they were to reach Great Britain. They were still as much exiles as when they were at Saint Germain's; and indeed they thought Saint Germain's a far more pleasant place of exile than Dublin Castle. They had no sympathy with the native population of the remote and half barbarous region to which a strange chance had led them. Nay, they were bound by common extraction and by common language to that colony which it was the chief object of the native population to root out. They had indeed, like the great body of their countrymen, always regarded the aboriginal Irish with very unjust contempt, as inferior to other European nations, not only in acquired knowledge, but in natural intelligence and courage; as born Gibeonites who had been liberally treated, in being permitted to hew wood and to draw water for a wiser and mightier people. These politicians also thought—and here they were undoubtedly in the right—that, if their master's object was to recover the throne of England, it would be madness in him to give himself up to the guidance of the O's and the

Macs who regarded England with mortal enmity. A law declaring the crown of Ireland independent, a law transferring miters, glebes, and tithes from the Protestant to the Roman Catholic Church, a law transferring ten millions of acres from Saxons to Celts, would doubtless be loudly applauded in Clare and Tipperary. But what would be the effect of such laws at Westminster? What at Oxford? It would be poor policy to alienate such men as Clarendon and Beaufort, Ken and Sherlock, in order to obtain the applause of the Rapparees of the Bog of Allen.

Thus the English and Irish factions in the Council at Dublin were engaged in a dispute which admitted of no compromise. Avaux meanwhile looked on that dispute from a point of view entirely his own. His object was neither the emancipation of Ireland nor the restoration of James, but the greatness of the French monarchy. In what way that object might be best attained was a very complicated problem. Undoubtedly a French statesman could not but wish for a counter-revolution in England. The effect of such a counter-revolution would be that the power which was the most formidable enemy of France would become her firmest ally, that William would sink into insignificance, and that the European coalition of which he was the chief would be dissolved. But what chance was there of such a counter-revolution? The English exiles indeed, after the fashion of exiles, confidently anticipated a speedy return to their country. James himself loudly boasted that his subjects on the other side of the water, though they had been misled for a moment by the specious names of religion, liberty, and property, were warmly attached to him, and would rally round him as soon as he appeared among them. But the wary envoy tried in vain to discover any foundation for these hopes. He could not find that they were warranted by any intelligence which had arrived from any part of Great Britain; and he was inclined to consider them as the mere day-dreams of a feeble mind. He thought it unlikely that the usurper, whose ability and resolution he had, during an unintermitted conflict of ten years, learned to appreciate, would easily part with the great prize which had been won by such strenuous exertions and profound combinations. It was therefore necessary to consider what arrangements



would be most beneficial to France, on the supposition that it proved impossible to dislodge William from England. And it was evident that, if William could not be dislodged from England, the arrangement most beneficial to France would be that which had been contemplated eighteen months before when James had no prospect of a male heir. Ireland must be severed from the English crown, purged of the English colonists, reunited to the Church of Rome, placed under the protection of the House of Bourbon, and made, in everything but name, a French province. In war, her resources would be absolutely at the command of her Lord Paramount. She would furnish his army with recruits. She would furnish his navy with fine harbors commanding all the great western outlets of the English trade. The strong national and religious antipathy with which her aboriginal population regarded the inhabitants of the neighboring island would be a sufficient guarantee for their fidelity to that government which could alone protect her against the Saxon.

On the whole, therefore, it appeared to Avaux that, of the two parties into which the Council at Dublin was divided, the Irish party was that which it was at present for the interest of France to support. He accordingly connected himself closely with the chiefs of that party, obtained from them the fullest avowals of all that they designed, and was soon able to report to his government that neither the gentry nor the common people were at all unwilling to become French.

The views of Louvois, incomparably the greatest statesman that France had produced since Richelieu, seem to have entirely agreed with those of Avaux. The best thing, Louvois wrote, that King James could do would be to forget that he had reigned in Great Britain, and to think only of putting Ireland into a good condition, and of establishing himself firmly there. Whether this were the true interest of the House of Stuart may be doubted. But it was undoubtedly the true interest of the House of Bourbon.

About the Scotch and English exiles, and especially about Melfort, Avaux constantly expressed himself with an asperity hardly to have been expected from a man of so much sense and so much knowledge of the world. Melfort was in a singularly unfortunate po-

sition. He was a renegade: he was a mortal enemy of the liberties of his country: he was of a bad and tyrannical nature; and yet he was, in some sense, a patriot. The consequence was that he was more universally detested than any man of his time. For, while his apostasy and his arbitrary maxims of government made him the abhorrence of England and Scotland, his anxiety for the dignity and integrity of the empire made him the abhorrence of the Irish and of the French.

The first question to be decided was whether James should remain at Dublin, or should put himself at the head of his army in Ulster. On this question the Irish and British factions joined battle. Reasons of no great weight were adduced on both sides; for neither party ventured to speak out. The point really in issue was whether the King should be in Irish or in British hands. If he remained at Dublin, it would be scarcely possible for him to withhold his assent from any bill presented to him by the Parliament which he had summoned to meet there. He would be forced to plunder, perhaps to attain, innocent Protestant gentlemen and clergymen by hundreds; and he would thus do irreparable mischief to his cause on the other side of Saint George's Channel. If he repaired to Ulster, he would be within a few hours' sail of Great Britain. As soon as Londonderry had fallen, and it was universally supposed that the fall of Londonderry could not be long delayed, he might cross the sea with part of his forces, and land in Scotland, where his friends were supposed to be numerous. When he was once on British ground, and in the midst of British adherents, it would no longer be in the power of the Irish to extort his consent to their schemes of spoliation and revenge.

The discussions in the Council were long and warm. Tyrconnel, who had just been created a Duke, advised his master to stay at Dublin. Melfort exhorted his Majesty to set out for Ulster. Avaux exerted all his influence in support of Tyrconnel; but James, whose personal inclinations were naturally on the British side of the question, determined to follow the advice of Melfort. Avaux was deeply mortified. In his official letters he expressed with great acrimony his contempt for the King's character and understanding. On Tyrconnel, who had said that he despaired



of the fortunes of James, and that the real question was between the King of France and the Prince of Orange, the ambassador pronounced what was meant to be a warm eulogy, but may perhaps be more properly called an invective. "If he were a born Frenchman he could not be more zealous for the interests of France." The conduct of Melfort, on the other hand, was the subject of an invective which much resembles eulogy: "He is neither a good Irishman nor a good Frenchman. All his affections are set on his own country."

Since the King was determined to go northward, Avaux did not choose to be left behind. The royal party set out, leaving Tyrconnel in charge at Dublin, and arrived at Charlemont on the thirteenth of April. The journey was a strange one. The country all along the road had been completely deserted by the industrious population, and laid waste by hands of robbers. "This," said one of the French officers, "is like traveling through the deserts of Arabia." Whatever effects the colonists had been able to remove were at Londonderry or Enniskillen. The rest had been stolen or destroyed. Avaux informed his court that he had not been able to get one truss of hay for his horses without sending five or six miles. No laborer dared bring anything for sale lest some marauder should lay hands on it by the way. The ambassador was put one night into a miserable taproom full of soldiers smoking, another night into a dismantled house without windows or shutters to keep out the rain. At Charlemont a bag of oatmeal was with great difficulty, and as a matter of favor, procured for the French legation. There was no wheaten bread, except at the table of the King, who had brought a little flour from Dublin, and to whom Avaux had lent a servant who knew how to bake. Those who were honored with an invitation to the royal table had their bread and wine measured out to them. Everybody else, however high in rank, ate horsecorn, and drank water or detestable beer, made with oats instead of barley, and flavored with some nameless herb as a substitute for hops. Yet report said that the country between Charlemont and Strabane was even more desolate than the country between Dublin and Charlemont. It was impossible to carry a large stock of provisions.

The roads were so bad and the horses so weak, that the baggage wagons had all been left far behind. The chief officers of the army were consequently in want of necessaries; and the ill-humor which was the natural effect of these privations was increased by the insensibility of James, who seemed not to be aware that everybody about him was not perfectly comfortable.

On the fourteenth of April the King and his train proceeded to Omagh. The rain fell: the wind blew: the horses could scarcely make their way through the mud, and in the face of the storm; and the road was frequently intersected by torrents which might almost be called rivers. The travelers had to pass several fords where the water was breast high. Some of the party fainted from fatigue and hunger. All around lay a frightful wilderness. In a journey of forty miles Avaux counted only three miserable cabins. Everything else was rock, bog, and moor. When at length the travelers reached Omagh, they found it in ruins. The Protestants, who were the majority of the inhabitants, had abandoned it, leaving not a wisp of straw nor a cask of liquor. The windows had been broken: the chimneys had been beaten in: the very locks and bolts of the doors had been carried away.

Avaux had never ceased to press the King to return to Dublin; but these expostulations had hitherto produced no effect. The obstinacy of James, however, was an obstinacy which had nothing in common with manly resolution, and which, though proof to argument, was easily shaken by caprice. He received at Omagh, early on the sixteenth of April, letters which alarmed him. He learned that a strong body of Protestants was in arms at Strabane, and that English ships of war had been seen near the mouth of Lough Foyle. In one minute three messages were sent to summon Avaux to the ruinous chamber in which the royal bed had been prepared. There James, half dressed, and with the air of a man bewildered by some great shock, announced his resolution to hasten back instantly to Dublin. Avaux listened, wondered, and approved. Melfort seemed prostrated by despair. The travelers retraced their steps, and, late in the evening, got back to Charlemont. There the King received dispatches very different from those

which had terrified him a few hours before. The Protestants who had assembled near Strabane had been attacked by Hamilton. Under a truehearted leader they would doubtless have stood their ground. But Lundy, who commanded them, had told them that all was lost, had ordered them to shift for themselves, and had set them the example of flight. They had accordingly retired in confusion to Londonderry. The King's correspondents pronounced it to be impossible that Londonderry should hold out. His Majesty had only to appear before the gates; and they would instantly fly open. James now changed his mind again, blamed himself for having been persuaded to turn his face southward, and, though it was late in the evening, called for his horses. The horses were in miserable plight; but, weary and half starved as they were, they were saddled. Melfort, completely victorious, carried off his master to the camp. Avaux, after remonstrating to no purpose, declared that he was resolved to return to Dublin. It may be suspected that the extreme discomfort which he had undergone had something to do with this resolution. For complaints of that discomfort make up a large part of his letters; and, in truth, a life passed in the palaces of Italy, in the neat parlors and gardens of Holland, and in the luxurious pavilions which adorned the suburbs of Paris, was a bad preparation for the ruined hovels of Ulster. He gave, however, to his master a more weighty reason for refusing to proceed northward. The journey of James had been undertaken in opposition to the unanimous sense of the Irish, and had excited great alarm among them. They apprehended that he meant to quit them, and to make a descent on Scotland. They knew that, once landed in Great Britain, he would have neither the will nor the power to do those things which they most desired. Avaux, by refusing to proceed further, gave them an assurance that, whoever might betray them, France would be their constant friend.

While Avaux was on his way to Dublin, James hastened towards Londonderry. He found his army concentrated a few miles south of the city. The French generals who had sailed with him from Brest were in his train; and two of them, Rosen and Maumont, were placed over the head of Richard Hamilton. Rosen was a native of Livonia,

who had in early youth become a soldier of fortune, who had fought his way to distinction, and who, though utterly destitute of the graces and accomplishments characteristic of the Court of Versailles, was nevertheless high in favor there. His temper was savage; his manners were coarse: his language was a strange jargon compounded of various dialects of French and German. Even those who thought best of him, and who maintained that his rough exterior covered some good qualities, owned that his looks were against him, and that it would be unpleasant to meet such a figure in the dusk at the corner of a wood. The little that is known of Maumont is to his honor.

In the camp it was generally expected that Londonderry would fall without a blow. Rosen confidently predicted that the mere sight of the Irish army would terrify the garrison into submission. But Richard Hamilton, who knew the temper of the colonists better, had misgivings. The assailants were sure of one important ally within the walls. Lundy, the Governor, professed the Protestant religion, and had joined in proclaiming William and Mary; but he was in secret communication with the enemies of his Church and of the Sovereigns to whom he had sworn fealty. Some have suspected that he was a concealed Jacobite, and that he had affected to acquiesce in the Revolution only in order that he might be better able to assist in bringing about a Restoration: but it is probable that his conduct is rather to be attributed to faintheartedness and poverty of spirit than to zeal for any public cause. He seems to have thought resistance hopeless; and in truth, to a military eye, the defenses of Londonderry appeared contemptible. The fortifications consisted of a simple wall overgrown with grass and weeds: there was no ditch even before the gates: the drawbridges had long been neglected: the chains were rusty and could scarcely be used: the parapets and towers were built after a fashion which might well move disciples of Vauban to laughter; and these feeble defenses were on almost every side commanded by heights. Indeed those who laid out the city had never meant that it should be able to stand a regular siege, and had contented themselves with throwing up works sufficient to protect the inhabitants against a tumultuary attack of



the Celtic peasantry. Avaux assured Louvois that a single French battalion would easily storm such a fastness. Even if the place should, notwithstanding all disadvantages, be able to repel a large army directed by the science and experience of generals who had served under Condé and Turenne, hunger must soon bring the contest to an end. The stock of provisions was small; and the population had been swollen to seven or eight times the ordinary number by a multitude of colonists flying from the rage of the natives.

Lundy, therefore, from the time when the Irish army entered Ulster, seems to have given up all thought of serious resistance. He talked so despondingly that the citizens and his own soldiers murmured against him. He seemed, they said, to be bent on discouraging them. Meanwhile the enemy drew daily nearer and nearer; and it was known that James himself was coming to take the command of his forces.

Just at this moment a glimpse of hope appeared. On the fourteenth of April ships from England anchored in the bay. They had on board two regiments which had been sent, under the command of a Colonel named Cunningham, to reinforce the garrison. Cunningham and several of his officers went on shore and conferred with Lundy. Lundy dissuaded them from landing their men. The place, he said, could not hold out. To throw more troops into it would therefore be worse than useless: for the more numerous the garrison, the more prisoners would fall into the hands of the enemy. The best thing that the two regiments could do would be to sail back to England. He meant, he said, to withdraw himself privately; and the inhabitants must then try to make good terms for themselves.

He went through the form of holding a council of war; but from this council he excluded all those officers of the garrison whose sentiments he knew to be different from his own. Some, who had ordinarily been summoned on such occasions, and who now came uninvited, were thrust out of the room. Whatever the Governor said was echoed by his creatures. Cunningham and Cunningham's companions could scarcely venture to oppose their opinion to that of a person whose local knowledge was necessarily far superior to theirs, and whom they were by their in-

structions directed to obey. One brave soldier murmured. "Understand this," he said, "to give up Londonderry is to give up Ireland." But his objections were contemptuously overruled. The meeting broke up. Cunningham and his officers returned to the ships, and made preparations for departing. Meanwhile Lundy privately sent a messenger to the headquarters of the enemy, with assurances that the city should be peaceably surrendered on the first summons.

But as soon as what had passed in the council of war was whispered about the streets, the spirit of the soldiers and citizens swelled up high and fierce against the dastardly and perfidious chief who had betrayed them. Many of his own officers declared that they no longer thought themselves bound to obey him. Voices were heard threatening, some that his brains should be blown out, some that he should be hanged on the walls. A deputation was sent to Cunningham imploring him to assume the command. He excused himself on the plausible ground that his orders were to take directions in all things from the Governor. Meanwhile it was rumored that the persons most in Lundy's confidence were stealing out of the town one by one. Long after dusk on the evening of the seventeenth it was found that the gates were open and that the keys had disappeared. The officers who made the discovery took on themselves to change the passwords and to double the guards. The night, however, passed over without any assault.

After some anxious hours the day broke. The Irish, with James at their head, were now within four miles of the city. A tumultuous council of the chief inhabitants was called. Some of them vehemently reproached the Governor to his face with his treachery. He had sold them, they cried, to their deadliest enemy: he had refused admission to the force which good King William had sent to defend them. While the altercation was at the height, the sentinels who paced the ramparts announced that the vanguard of the hostile army was in sight. Lundy had given orders that there should be no firing; but his authority was at an end. Two gallant soldiers, Major Henry Baker and Captain Adam Murray, called the people to arms. They were assisted by the eloquence of an aged clergyman, George Walker, rector



of the Parish of Donaghmore, who had, with many of his neighbors, taken refuge in Londonderry. The whole crowded city was moved by one impulse. Soldiers, gentlemen, yeomen, artisans, rushed to the walls and manned the guns. James, who, confident of success, had approached within a hundred yards of the southern gate, was received with a shout of "No surrender," and with a fire from the nearest bastion. An officer of his staff fell dead by his side. The King and his attendants made all haste to get out of reach of the cannon balls. Lundy, who was now in imminent danger of being torn limb from limb by those whom he had betrayed, hid himself in an inner chamber. There he lay during the day, and, with the generous and politic connivance of Murray and Walker, made his escape at night in the disguise of a porter. The part of the wall from which he let himself down is still pointed out; and people still living talk of having tasted the fruit of a pear tree which assisted him in his descent. His name is, to this day, held in execration by the Protestants of the North of Ireland; and his effigy is still annually hung and burned by them with marks of abhorrence similar to those which in England are appropriated to Guy Faux.

And now Londonderry was left destitute of all military and of all civil government. No man in the town had a right to command any other: the defenses were weak: the provisions were scanty: an incensed tyrant and a great army were at the gates. But within was that which has often, in desperate extremities, retrieved the fallen fortunes of nations. Betrayed, deserted, disorganized, unprovided with resources, begirt with enemies, the noble city was still no easy conquest. Whatever an engineer might think of the strength of the ramparts, all that was most intelligent, most courageous, most high-spirited among the Englishry of Leinster and of Northern Ulster was crowded behind them. The number of men capable of bearing arms within the walls was seven thousand; and the whole world could not have furnished seven thousand men better qualified to meet a terrible emergency with clear judgment, dauntless valor, and stubborn patience. They were all zealous Protestants; and the Protestantism of the majority was tinged with Puritanism. They had much in common with that sober, reso-

lute, and Godfearing class out of which Cromwell had formed his unconquerable army. But the peculiar situation in which they had been placed had developed in them some qualities which, in the mother country, might possibly have remained latent. The English inhabitants of Ireland were an aristocratic caste, which had been enabled, by superior civilization, by close union, by sleepless vigilance, by cool intrepidity, to keep in subjection a numerous and hostile population. Almost every one of them had been in some measure trained both to military and to political functions. Almost every one was familiar with the use of arms, and was accustomed to bear a part in the administration of justice. It was remarked by contemporary writers that the colonists had something of the Castilian haughtiness of manner, though none of the Castilian indolence, that they spoke English with remarkable purity and correctness, and that they were, both as militiamen and as jurymen, superior to their kindred in the mother country. In all ages, men situated as the Anglo-Saxons in Ireland were situated have had peculiar vices and peculiar virtues, the vices and virtues of masters, as opposed to the vices and virtues of slaves. The member of a dominant race is, in his dealings with the subject race, seldom indeed fraudulent—for fraud is the resource of the weak—but imperious, insolent, and cruel. Towards his brethren, on the other hand, his conduct is generally just, kind, and even noble. His self-respect leads him to respect all who belong to his own order. His interest impels him to cultivate a good understanding with those whose prompt, strenuous, and courageous assistance may at any moment be necessary to preserve his property and life. It is a truth ever present to his mind that his own well-being depends on the ascendancy of the class to which he belongs. His very selfishness therefore is sublimed into public spirit: and this public spirit is stimulated to fierce enthusiasm by sympathy, by the desire of applause, and by the dread of infamy. For the only opinion which he values is the opinion of his fellows; and in their opinion devotion to the common cause is the most sacred of duties. The character, thus formed, has two aspects. Seen on one side, it must be regarded by every well constituted mind with disapprobation. Seen on the other, it

irresistibly extorts applause. The Spartan, smiting and spurning the wretched Helot, moves our disgust. But the same Spartan, calmly dressing his hair, and uttering his concise jests, on what he well knows to be his last day, in the pass of Thermopylæ, is not to be contemplated without admiration. To a superficial observer it may seem strange that so much evil and so much good should be found together. But in truth the good and the evil, which at first sight appear almost incompatible, are closely connected, and have a common origin. It was because the Spartan had been taught to revere himself as one of a race of sovereigns, and to look down on all that was not Spartan as of an inferior species, that he had no fellow feeling for the miserable serfs who crouched before him, and that the thought of submitting to a foreign master, or of turning his back before an enemy, never, even in the last extremity, crossed his mind. Something of the same character, compounded of tyrant and hero, has been found in all nations which have domineered over more numerous nations. But it has nowhere in modern Europe shown itself so conspicuously as in Ireland. With what contempt, with what antipathy, the ruling minority in that country long regarded the subject majority may be best learned from the hateful laws which, within the memory of men still living, disgraced the Irish statute book. Those laws were at length annulled: but the spirit which had dictated them survived them, and even at this day sometimes breaks out in excesses pernicious to the commonwealth and dishonorable to the Protestant religion. Nevertheless it is impossible to deny that the English colonists have had, with too many of the faults, all the noblest virtues of a sovereign caste. The faults have, as was natural, been most offensively exhibited in times of prosperity and security: the virtues have been most resplendent in times of distress and peril; and never were those virtues more signally displayed than by the defenders of Londonderry, when their Governor had abandoned them, and when the camp of their mortal enemy was pitched before their walls.

No sooner had the first burst of the rage excited by the perfidy of Lundy spent itself than those whom he had betrayed proceeded, with a gravity and prudence worthy of the

most renowned senates, to provide for the order and defense of the city. Two governors were elected, Baker and Walker. Baker took the chief military command. Walker's especial business was to preserve internal tranquillity, and to dole out supplies from the magazines. The inhabitants capable of bearing arms were distributed into eight regiments. Colonels, captains, and subordinate officers were appointed. In a few hours every man knew his post, and was ready to repair to it as soon as the beat of the drum was heard. That machinery, by which Oliver had, in the preceding generation, kept up among his soldiers so stern and so pertinacious an enthusiasm, was again employed with not less complete success. Preaching and praying occupied a large part of every day. Eighteen clergymen of the Established Church and seven or eight nonconformist ministers were within the walls. They all exerted themselves indefatigably to rouse and sustain the spirit of the people. Among themselves there was for the time entire harmony. All disputes about church government, postures, ceremonies, were forgotten. The Bishop, having found that his lectures on passive obedience were derided even by the Episcopalians, had withdrawn himself, first to Raphoe, and then to England, and was preaching in a chapel in London. On the other hand, a Scotch fanatic named Hewson, who had exhorted the Presbyterians not to ally themselves with such as refused to subscribe the Covenant, had sunk under the well merited disgust and scorn of the whole Protestant community. The aspect of the Cathedral was remarkable. Cannon were planted on the summit of the broad tower which has since given place to a tower of different proportions. Ammunition was stored in the vaults. In the choir the liturgy of the Anglican Church was read every morning. Every afternoon the Dissenters crowded to a simpler worship.

James had waited twenty-four hours, expecting, as it should seem, the performance of Lundy's promises; and in twenty-four hours the arrangements for the defense of Londonderry were complete. On the evening of the nineteenth of April, a trumpeter came to the southern gate, and asked whether the engagements into which the Governor had entered would be fulfilled. The answer



was that the men who guarded these walls had nothing to do with the Governor's engagements, and were determined to resist to the last.

On the following day a messenger of higher rank was sent, Claude Hamilton, Lord Strabane, one of the few Roman Catholic peers of Ireland. Murray, who had been appointed to the command of one of the eight regiments into which the garrison was distributed, advanced from the gate to meet the flag of truce; and a short conference was held. Strabane had been authorized to make large promises. The citizens should have a free pardon for all that was past if they would submit to their lawful Sovereign. Murray himself should have a colonel's commission, and a thousand pounds in money. "The men of Londonderry," answered Murray, "have done nothing that requires a pardon, and own no Sovereign but King William and Queen Mary. It will not be safe for your Lordship to stay longer, or to return on the same errand. Let me have the honor of seeing you through the lines."

James had been assured, and had fully expected, that the city would yield as soon as it was known that he was before the walls. Finding himself mistaken, he broke loose from the control of Melfort, and determined to return instantly to Dublin. Rosen accompanied the King. The direction of the siege was intrusted to Maumont. Richard Hamilton was second, and Pusignan third, in command.

The operations now commenced in earnest. The besiegers began by battering the town. It was soon on fire in several places. Roofs and upper stories of houses fell in, and crushed the inmates. During a short time the garrison, many of whom had never before seen the effect of a cannonade, seemed to be discomposed by the crash of chimneys, and by the heaps of ruin mingled with disfigured corpses. But familiarity with danger and horror produced in a few hours the natural effect. The spirit of the people rose so high that their chiefs thought it safe to act on the offensive. On the twenty-first of April a sally was made under the command of Murray. The Irish stood their ground resolutely; and a furious and bloody contest took place. Maumont, at the head of a body of cavalry, flew to the place where the fight was

raging. He was struck in the head by a musket ball, and fell a corpse. The besiegers lost several other officers, and about two hundred men, before the colonists could be driven in. Murray escaped with difficulty. His horse was killed under him; and he was beset by enemies: but he was able to defend himself till some of his friends made a rush from the gate to his rescue, with old Walker at their head.

In consequence of the death of Maumont, Hamilton was once more commander of the Irish army. His exploits in that post did not raise his reputation. He was a fine gentleman and a brave soldier; but he had no pretensions to the character of a great general, and had never, in his life, seen a siege. Pusignan had more science and energy. But Pusignan survived Maumont little more than a fortnight. At four in the morning of the sixth of May, the garrison made another sally, took several flags, and killed many of the besiegers. Pusignan, fighting gallantly, was shot through the body. The wound was one which a skillful surgeon might have cured: but there was no such surgeon in the Irish camp; and the communication with Dublin was slow and irregular. The poor Frenchman died, complaining bitterly of the barbarous ignorance and negligence which had shortened his days. A medical man, who had been sent down express from the capital, arrived after the funeral. James, in consequence, as it should seem, of this disaster, established a daily post between Dublin Castle and Hamilton's headquarters. Even by this conveyance letters did not travel very expeditiously: for the couriers went on foot; and, from fear probably of the Enniskilleners, took a circuitous route from military post to military post.

May passed away: June arrived; and still Londonderry held out. There had been many sallies and skirmishes with various success: but, on the whole, the advantage had been with the garrison. Several officers of note had been carried prisoners into the city; and two French banners, torn after hard fighting from the besiegers, had been hung as trophies in the chancel of the Cathedral. It seemed that the siege must be turned into a blockade. But before the hope of reducing the town by main force was relinquished, it was determined to make a great effort. The



point selected for assault was an outwork called Windmill Hill, which was not far from the southern gate. Religious stimulants were employed to animate the courage of the forlorn hope. Many volunteers bound themselves by oath to make their way into the works or to perish in the attempt. Captain Butler, son of the Lord Mountgarret, undertook to lead the sworn men to the attack. On the walls the colonists were drawn up in three ranks. The office of those who were behind was to load the muskets of those who were in front. The Irish came on boldly and with a fearful uproar, but after long and hard fighting were driven back. The women of Londonderry were seen amidst the thickest fire serving out water and ammunition to their husbands and brothers. In one place, where the wall was only seven feet high, Butler and some of his sworn men succeeded in reaching the top; but they were all killed or made prisoners. At length, after four hundred of the Irish had fallen, their chiefs ordered a retreat to be sounded.

Nothing was left but to try the effect of hunger. It was known that the stock of food in the city was but slender. Indeed it was thought strange that the supplies should have held out so long. Every precaution was now taken against the introduction of provisions. All the avenues leading to the city by land were closely guarded. On the south were encamped, along the left bank of the Foyle, the horsemen who had followed Lord Galway from the valley of the Barrow. Their chief was of all the Irish captains the most dreaded and the most abhorred by the Protestants. For he had disciplined his men with rare skill and care; and many frightful stories were told of his barbarity and perfidy. Long lines of tents, occupied by the infantry of Butler and O'Neil, of Lord Slane and Lord Gormanstown, by Nugent's Westmeath men, by Eustace's Kildare men, and by Cavanagh's Kerry men, extended northward till they again approached the water side. The river was fringed with forts and batteries which no vessel could pass without great peril. After some time it was determined to make the security still more complete by throwing a barricade across the stream, about a mile and a half below the city. Several boats full of stones were sunk. A row of stakes was driven into the bottom

of the river. Large pieces of fir wood, strongly bound together, formed a boom which was more than a quarter of a mile in length, and which was firmly fastened to both shores, by cables a foot thick. A huge stone, to which the cable on the left bank was attached, was removed many years later, for the purpose of being polished and shaped into a column. But the intention was abandoned, and the rugged mass still lies, not many yards from its original site, amidst the shades which surround a pleasant country house named Boom Hall. Hard by is a well from which the besiegers drank. A little further off is a burial ground where they laid their slain, and where even in our own time the spade of the gardener has struck upon many skulls and thighbones at a short distance beneath the turf and flowers.

While these things were passing in the North, James was holding his court at Dublin. On his return thither from Londonderry he received intelligence that the French fleet, commanded by the Count of Chateau Renaud, had anchored in Bantry Bay, and had put on shore a large quantity of military stores and a supply of money. Herbert, who had just been sent to those seas with an English squadron for the purpose of intercepting the communications between Brittany and Ireland, learned where the enemy lay, and sailed into the bay with the intention of giving battle. But the wind was unfavorable to him: his force was greatly inferior to that which was opposed to him; and after some firing, which caused no serious loss to either side, he thought it prudent to stand out to sea, while the French retired into the recesses of the harbor. He steered for Scilly, where he expected to find reinforcements; and Chateau Renaud, content with the credit which he had acquired, and afraid of losing it if he stayed, hastened back to Brest, though earnestly entreated by James to come round to Dublin.

Both sides claimed the victory. The Commons at Westminster absurdly passed a vote of thanks to Herbert. James, not less absurdly, ordered bonfires to be lighted, and a *Te Deum* to be sung. But these marks of joy by no means satisfied Avaux, whose national vanity was too strong even for his characteristic prudence and politeness. He complained that James was so unjust and un-

grateful as to attribute the result of the late action to the reluctance with which the English seamen fought against their rightful King and their old commander, and that his Majesty did not seem to be well pleased by being told that they were flying over the ocean pursued by the triumphant French. Dover, too, was a bad Frenchman. He seemed to take no pleasure in the defeat of his countrymen, and had been heard to say that the affair in Bantry Bay did not deserve to be called a battle.

On the day after the *Te Deum* had been sung at Dublin for this indecisive skirmish, the Parliament convoked by James assembled. The number of temporal peers of Ireland, when he arrived in that kingdom, was about a hundred. Of these only fourteen obeyed his summons. Of the fourteen, ten were Roman Catholics. By the reversing of old attainders, and by new creations, seventeen more Lords, all Roman Catholics, were introduced into the Upper House. The Protestant Bishops of Meath, Ossory, Cork, and Limerick, whether from a sincere conviction that they could not lawfully withhold their obedience even from a tyrant, or from a vain hope that the heart even of a tyrant might be softened by their patience, made their appearance in the midst of their mortal enemies.

The House of Commons consisted almost exclusively of Irishmen and Papists. With the writs the returning officers had received from Tyrconnel letters naming the persons whom he wished to see elected. The largest constituent bodies in the kingdom were at this time very small. For scarcely any but Roman Catholics dared to show their faces; and the Roman Catholic freeholders were then very few, not more, it is said, in some counties, than ten or twelve. Even in cities so considerable as Cork, Limerick, and Galway, the number of persons who, under the new Charters, were entitled to vote did not exceed twenty-four. About two hundred and fifty members took their seats. Of these only six were Protestants. The list of the names sufficiently indicates the religious and political temper of the assembly. Alone among the Irish parliaments of that age, this parliament was filled with Dermots and Geohagans, O'Neils and O'Donovans, Macmahons, Macnamaras, and Macgillicuddies. The lead was taken by a few men whose abilities had been

improved by the study of the law, or by experience acquired in foreign countries. The Attorney General, Sir Richard Nagle, who represented the county of Cork, was allowed, even by Protestants, to be an acute and learned jurist. Francis Plowden, the Commissioner of Revenue, who sat for Bannow, and acted as chief minister of finance, was an Englishman, and, as he had been a principal agent of the Order of Jesuits in money matters, must be supposed to have been an excellent man of business. Colonel Henry Luttrell, member for the county of Carlow, had served long in France, and had brought back to his native Ireland a sharpened intellect and polished manners, a flattering tongue, some skill in war, and much more skill in intrigue. His elder brother, Colonel Simon Luttrell, who was member for the county of Dublin, and military governor of the capital, had also resided in France, and, though inferior to Henry in parts and activity, made a highly distinguished figure among the adherents of James. The other member for the county of Dublin was Colonel Patrick Sarsfield. This gallant officer was regarded by the natives as one of themselves: for his ancestors on the paternal side, though originally English, were among those early colonists who were proverbially said to have become more Irish than Irishmen. His mother was of noble Celtic blood; and he was firmly attached to the old religion. He had inherited an estate of about two thousand a year, and was therefore one of the wealthiest Roman Catholics in the kingdom. His knowledge of courts and camps was such as few of his countrymen possessed. He had long borne a commission in the English Life Guards, and had lived much about Whitehall, and had fought bravely under Monmouth on the Continent, and against Monmouth at Sedgemoor. He had, Avaux wrote, more personal influence than any man in Ireland, and was indeed a gentleman of eminent merit, brave, upright, honorable, careful of his men in quarters, and certain to be always found at their head in the day of battle. His intrepidity, his frankness, his boundless good nature, his stature, which far exceeded that of ordinary men, and the strength which he exerted in personal conflict, gained for him the affectionate admiration of the populace. It is remarkable that the English generally re-



spected him as a valiant, skillful, and generous enemy, and that, even in the most ribald farces which were performed by mountebanks in Smithfield, he was always excepted from the disgraceful imputations which it was then the fashion to throw on the Irish nation.

But men like these were rare in the House of Commons which had met at Dublin. It is no reproach to the Irish nation, a nation which has since furnished its full proportion of eloquent and accomplished senators, to say that, of all the parliaments which have met in the British islands, Barebone's parliament not excepted, the assembly convoked by James was the most deficient in all the qualities which a legislature should possess. The stern domination of a hostile caste had blighted the faculties of the Irish gentleman. If he was so fortunate as to have lands, he had generally passed his life on them, shooting, fishing, carousing, and making love among his vassals. If his estate had been confiscated, he had wandered about from bawn to bawn, and from cabin to cabin, levying small contributions, and living at the expense of other men. He had never sat in the House of Commons: he had never even taken an active part at an election: he had never been a magistrate: scarcely ever had he been on a grand jury. He had therefore absolutely no experience of public affairs. The English squire of that age, though assuredly not a very profound or enlightened politician, was a statesman and a philosopher when compared with the Roman Catholic squire of Munster or Connaught.

The Parliaments of Ireland had then no fixed place of assembling. Indeed they met so seldom and broke up so speedily that it would hardly have been worth while to build and furnish a palace for their special use. It was not till the Hanoverian dynasty had been long on the throne, that a senate house which sustains a comparison with the finest compositions of Inigo Jones arose between the College and the Castle. In the seventeenth century there stood, on the spot where the portico and dome of the Four Courts now overlook the Liffey, an ancient building which had once been a convent of Dominican friars, but had since the Reformation been appropriated to the use of the legal profession, and bore the name of the

King's Inns. There accommodation had been provided for the parliament. On the seventh of May, James, dressed in royal robes and wearing a crown, took his seat on the throne in the House of Lords, and ordered the Commons to be summoned to the bar.

He then expressed his gratitude to the natives of Ireland for having adhered to his cause when the people of his other kingdoms had deserted him. His resolution to abolish all religious disabilities in all his dominions he declared to be unalterable. He invited the houses to take the Act of Settlement into consideration, and to redress the injuries of which the old proprietors of the soil had reason to complain. He concluded by acknowledging in warm terms his obligations to the King of France.

When the royal speech had been pronounced, the Chancellor directed the Commons to repair to their chamber and to elect a Speaker. They chose the Attorney General Nagle; and the choice was approved by the King.

The Commons next passed resolutions expressing warm gratitude both to James and to Lewis. Indeed it was proposed to send a deputation with an address to Avaux; but the Speaker pointed out the gross impropriety of such a step; and, on this occasion, his interference was successful. It was seldom however that the House was disposed to listen to reason. The debates were all rant and tumult. Judge Daly, a Roman Catholic, but an honest and able man, could not refrain from lamenting the indecency and folly with which the members of his Church carried on the work of legislation. Those gentlemen, he said, were not a Parliament: they were a mere rabble: they resembled nothing so much as the mob of fishermen and market gardeners, who, at Naples, yelled and threw up their caps in honor of Massaniello. It was painful to hear member after member talking wild nonsense about his own losses, and clamoring for an estate, when the lives of all and the independence of their common country were in peril. These words were spoken in private; but some talebearer repeated them to the Commons. A violent storm broke forth. Daly was ordered to attend at the bar; and there was little doubt that he would be severely dealt with. But, just when he was



at the door, one of the members rushed in, shouting, "Good news: Londonderry is taken." The whole House rose. All the hats were flung into the air. Three loud huzzas were raised. Every heart was softened by the happy tidings. Nobody would hear of punishment at such a moment. The order for Daly's attendance was discharged amidst cries of "No submission; no submission; we pardon him." In a few hours it was known that Londonderry held out as obstinately as ever. This transaction, in itself unimportant, deserves to be recorded, as showing how destitute that House of Commons was of the qualities which ought to be found in the great council of a kingdom. And this assembly, without experience, without gravity, and without temper, was now to legislate on questions which would have tasked to the utmost the capacity of the greatest statesmen.

One Act James induced them to pass which would have been most honorable to him and to them, if there were not abundant proofs that it was meant to be a dead letter. It was an Act purporting to grant entire liberty of conscience to all Christian sects. On this occasion a proclamation was put forth announcing in boastful language to the English people that their rightful King had now signally refuted those slanderers who had accused him of affecting zeal for religious liberty merely in order to serve a turn. If he were at heart inclined to persecution, would he not have persecuted the Irish Protestants? He did not want power. He did not want provocation. Yet at Dublin, where the members of his Church were the majority, as at Westminster, where they were a minority, he had firmly adhered to the principles laid down in his much maligned Declaration of Indulgence. Unfortunately for him, the same wind which carried his fair professions to England carried thither also evidence that his professions were insincere. A single law, worthy of Turgot or of Franklin, seemed ludicrously out of place in the midst of a crowd of laws which would have disgraced Gardiner or Alva.

A necessary preliminary to the vast work of spoliation and slaughter on which the legislators of Dublin were bent, was an Act annulling the authority which the English Parliament, both as the supreme legislature and

as the supreme Court of Appeal, had hitherto exercised over Ireland. This Act was rapidly passed; and then followed, in quick succession, confiscations and proscriptions on a gigantic scale. The personal estates of absentees above the age of seventeen years were transferred to the King. When lay property was thus invaded, it was not likely that the endowments which had been, in contravention of every sound principle, lavished on the Church of the minority would be spared. To reduce those endowments, without prejudice to existing interests, would have been a reform worthy of a good prince and of a good parliament. But no such reform would satisfy the vindictive bigots who sat at the King's Inns. By one sweeping Act, the greater part of the tithe was transferred from the Protestant to the Roman Catholic clergy; and the existing incumbents were left, without one farthing of compensation, to die of hunger. A Bill repealing the Act of Settlement and transferring many thousands of square miles from Saxon to Celtic landlords was brought in and carried by acclamation.

Of legislation such as this it is impossible to speak too severely: but for the legislators there are excuses which it is the duty of the historian to notice. They acted unmercifully, unjustly, unwisely. But it would be absurd to expect mercy, justice, or wisdom from a class of men first abased by many years of oppression, and then maddened by the joy of a sudden deliverance, and armed with irresistible power. The representatives of the Irish nation were, with few exceptions, rude and ignorant. They had lived in a state of constant irritation. With aristocratical sentiments they had been in a servile position. With the highest pride of blood, they had been exposed to daily affronts, such as might well have roused the choler of the humblest plebeian. In sight of the fields and castles which they regarded as their own, they had been glad to be invited by a peasant to partake of his whey and his potatoes. Those violent emotions of hatred and cupidity which the situation of the native gentleman could scarcely fail to call forth appeared to him under the specious guise of patriotism and piety. For his enemies were the enemies of his nation; and the same tyranny which had robbed him of his patrimony had robbed his Church of vast wealth bestowed on her by

the devotion of an earlier age. How was power likely to be used by an uneducated and inexperienced man, agitated by strong desires and resentments which he mistook for sacred duties? And, when two or three hundred such men were brought together in one assembly, what was to be expected but that the passions which each had long nursed in silence would be at once matured into fearful vigor by the influence of sympathy?

Between James and his parliament there was little in common, except hatred of the Protestant religion. He was an Englishman. Superstition had not utterly extinguished all national feeling in his mind; and he could not but be displeased by the malevolence with which his Celtic supporters regarded the race from which he sprang. The range of his intellectual vision was small. Yet it was impossible that, having reigned in England, and looking constantly forward to the day when he should reign in England once more, he should not take a wider view of politics than was taken by men who had no objects out of Ireland. The few Irish Protestants who still adhered to him, and the British nobles, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, who had followed him into exile, implored him to restrain the violence of the rapacious and vindictive senate which he had convoked. They with peculiar earnestness implored him not to consent to the repeal of the Act of Settlement. On what security, they asked, could any man invest his money or give a portion to his children, if he could not rely on positive laws and on the uninterrupted possession of many years? The military adventurers among whom Cromwell portioned out the soil might perhaps be regarded as wrongdoers. But how large a part of their estates had passed, by fair purchase, into other hands! How much money had proprietors borrowed on mortgage, on statute merchant, on statute staple! How many capitalists had, trusting to legislative acts and to royal promises, come over from England, and bought land in Ulster and Leinster, without the least misgiving as to the title! What a sum had those capitalists expended, during a quarter of a century, in building, draining, inclosing, planting! The terms of the compromise which Charles the Second had sanctioned might not be in all respects just. But was one injustice to be re-

dressed by committing another injustice more monstrous still? And what effect was likely to be produced in England by the cry of thousands of innocent English families whom an English king had doomed to ruin? The complaints of such a body of sufferers might delay, might prevent, the Restoration to which all loyal subjects were eagerly looking forward; and, even if his Majesty should, in spite of those complaints, be happily restored, he would to the end of his life feel the pernicious effects of the injustice which evil advisers were now urging him to commit. He would find that, in trying to quiet one set of malcontents, he had created another. As surely as he yielded to the clamor raised at Dublin for a repeal of the Act of Settlement, he would, from the day on which he returned to Westminster, be assailed by as loud and pertinacious a clamor for a repeal of that repeal. He could not but be aware that no English Parliament, however loyal, would permit such laws as were now passing through the Irish Parliament to stand. Had he made up his mind to take the part of Ireland against the universal sense of England? If so, to what could he look forward but another banishment and another deposition? Or would he, when he had recovered the greater kingdom, revoke the boons by which, in his distress, he had purchased the help of the smaller? It might seem an insult to him even to suggest that he could harbor the thought of such unprincely, of such unmanly, perfidy. Yet what other course would be left to him? And was it not better for him to refuse unreasonable concessions now than to retract those concessions hereafter in a manner which must bring on him reproaches insupportable to a noble mind? His situation was doubtless embarrassing. Yet in this case, as in other cases, it would be found that the path of justice was the path of wisdom.

Though James had, in his speech at the opening of the session, declared against the Act of Settlement, he felt that these arguments were unanswerable. He held several conferences with the leading members of the House of Commons, and earnestly recommended moderation. But his exhortations irritated the passions which he wished to allay. Many of the native gentry held high and violent language. It was impudent, they said,



to talk about the rights of purchasers. How could right spring out of wrong? People who chose to buy property acquired by injustice must take the consequences of their folly and cupidity. It was clear that the Lower House was altogether impracticable. James had, four years before, refused to make the smallest concession to the most obsequious parliament that has ever sat in England; and it might have been expected that the obstinacy, which he had never wanted when it was a vice, would not have failed him now when it would have been a virtue. During a short time he seemed determined to act justly. He even talked of dissolving the parliament. The chiefs of the old Celtic families, on the other hand, said publicly that, if he did not give them back their inheritance, they would not fight for his. His very soldiers railed on him in the streets of Dublin. At length he determined to go down himself to the House of Peers, not in his robes and crown, but in the garb in which he had been used to attend debates at Westminster, and personally to solicit the Lords to put some check on the violence of the Commons. But just as he was getting into his coach for this purpose he was stopped by Avaux. Avaux was as zealous as any Irishman for the bills which the Commons were urging forward. It was enough for him that those bills seemed likely to make the enmity between England and Ireland irreconcilable. His remonstrances induced James to abstain from openly opposing the repeal of the Act of Settlement. Still the unfortunate prince continued to cherish some faint hope that the law for which the Commons were so zealous would be rejected, or at least modified, by the Peers. Lord Granard, one of the few Protestant noblemen who sat in that parliament, exerted himself strenuously on the side of public faith and sound policy. The King sent him a message of thanks. "We Protestants," said Granard to Powis who brought the message, "are few in number. We can do little. His Majesty should try his influence with the Roman Catholics." "His Majesty," answered Powis with an oath, "dares not say what he thinks." A few days later James met Granard riding towards the parliament house. "Where are you going, my Lord?" said the King. "To enter my protest, Sir," answered Granard, "against the repeal of the Act of Settlement."

"You are right," said the King; "but I am fallen into the hands of people who will ram that and much more down my throat."

James yielded to the will of the Commons; but the unfavorable impression which his short and feeble resistance had made upon them was not to be removed by his submission. They regarded him with profound distrust; they considered him as at heart an Englishman; and not a day passed without some indication of this feeling. They were in no haste to grant him a supply. One party among them planned an address urging him to dismiss Melfort as an enemy of their nation. Another party drew up a bill for deposing all the Protestant Bishops, even the four who were then actually sitting in Parliament. It was not without difficulty that Avaux and Tyrconnel, whose influence in the Lower House far exceeded the King's, could restrain the zeal of the majority.

It is remarkable that, while the King was losing the confidence and good will of the Irish Commons by faintly defending against them, in one quarter, the institution of property, he was himself, in another quarter, attacking that institution with a violence, if possible, more reckless than theirs. He soon found that no money came into his Exchequer. The cause was sufficiently obvious. Trade was at an end. Floating capital had been withdrawn in great masses from the island. Of the fixed capital much had been destroyed, and the rest was lying idle. Thousands of those Protestants who were the most industrious and intelligent part of the population had emigrated to England. Thousands had taken refuge in the places which still held out for William and Mary. Of the Roman Catholic peasantry who were in the vigor of life the majority had enlisted in the army or had joined gangs of plunderers. The poverty of the treasury was the necessary effect of the poverty of the country: public prosperity could be restored only by the restoration of private prosperity; and private prosperity could be restored only by years of peace and security. James was absurd enough to imagine that there was a more speedy and efficacious remedy. He could, he conceived, at once extricate himself from his financial difficulties by the simple process of calling a farthing a shilling. The right of coining was undoubtedly a flower of the prerogative; and,



in his view, the right of coining included the right of debasing the coin. Pots, pans, knockers of doors, pieces of ordnance which had long been past use, were carried to the mint. In a short time lumps of base metal, nominally worth near a million sterling, intrinsically worth about a sixtieth part of that sum, were in circulation. A royal edict declared these pieces to be legal tender in all cases whatever. A mortgage for a thousand pounds was cleared off by a bag of counters made out of old kettles. The creditors who complained to the Court of Chancery were told by Fitton to take their money and be gone. But of all classes the tradesmen of Dublin, who were generally Protestants, were the greatest losers. At first, of course, they raised their demands: but the magistrates of the city took on themselves to meet this heretical machination by putting forth a tariff regulating prices. Any man who belonged to the caste now dominant might walk into a shop, lay on the counter a bit of brass worth threepence, and carry off goods to the value of half a guinea. Legal redress was out of the question. Indeed the sufferers thought themselves happy if, by the sacrifice of their stock in trade, they could redeem their limbs and their lives. There was not a baker's shop in the city round which twenty or thirty soldiers were not constantly prowling. Some persons who refused the base money were arrested by troopers and carried before the Provost Marshal, who cursed them, swore at them, locked them up in dark cells, and, by threatening to hang them at their own doors, soon overcame their resistance. Of all the plagues of that time none made a deeper or a more lasting impression on the minds of the Protestants of Dublin than the plague of the brass money. To the recollection of the confusion and misery which had been produced by James's coin must be in part ascribed the strenuous opposition which, thirty-five years later, large classes, firmly attached to the House of Hanover, offered to the government of George the First in the affair of Wood's patent.

There can be no question that James, in thus altering, by his own authority, the terms of all the contracts in the kingdom, assumed a power which belonged only to the whole legislature. Yet the Commons did not remonstrate. There was no power, however unconstitutional, which they were not willing

to concede to him, as long as he used it to crush and plunder the English population. On the other hand, they respected no prerogative, however ancient, however legitimate, however salutary, if they apprehended that he might use it to protect the race which they abhorred. They were not satisfied till they had extorted his reluctant consent to a portentous law, a law without a parallel in the history of civilized countries, the great Act of Attainder.

A list was framed containing between two and three thousand names. At the top was half the peerage of Ireland. Then came baronets, knights, clergymen, squires, merchants, yeomen, artisans, women, children. No investigation was made. Any member who wished to rid himself of a creditor, a rival, a private enemy, gave in the name to the clerk at the table, and it was generally inserted without discussion. The only debate of which any account has come down to us related to the Earl of Strafford. He had friends in the House who ventured to offer something in his favor. But a few words from Simon Luttrell settled the question. "I have," he said, "heard the King say some hard things of that lord." This was thought sufficient, and the name of Strafford stands fifth in the long table of the proscribed.

Days were fixed before which those whose names were on the list were required to surrender themselves to such justice as was then administered to English Protestants in Dublin. If a proscribed person was in Ireland, he must surrender himself by the tenth of August. If he had left Ireland since the fifth of November 1688, he must surrender himself by the first of September. If he had left Ireland before the fifth of November 1688, he must surrender himself by the first of October. If he failed to appear by the appointed day, he was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered without a trial, and his property was to be confiscated. It might be physically impossible for him to deliver himself up within the time fixed by the Act. He might be bedridden. He might be in the West Indies. He might be in prison. Indeed there notoriously were such cases. Among the attainted Lords was Mountjoy. He had been induced by the villainy of Tyrconnel to trust himself at Saint Germain: he had been thrown into the Bastille: he was still lying there; and the Irish

parliament was not ashamed to enact that, unless he could, within a few weeks, make his escape from his cell, and present himself at Dublin, he should be put to death.

As it was not even pretended that there had been any inquiry into the guilt of those who were thus proscribed, as not a single one among them had been heard in his own defense, and as it was certain that it would be physically impossible for many of them to surrender themselves in time, it was clear that nothing but a large exercise of the royal prerogative of mercy could prevent the perpetration of iniquities so horrible that no precedent could be found for them even in the lamentable history of the troubles of Ireland. The Commons therefore determined that the royal prerogative of mercy should be limited. Several regulations were devised for the purpose of making the passing of pardons difficult and costly: and finally it was enacted that every pardon granted by his Majesty, after the end of November 1689, to any of the many hundreds of persons who had been sentenced to death without a trial, should be absolutely void and of none effect. Sir Richard Nagle came in state to the bar of the Lords and presented the bill with a speech worthy of the occasion. "Many of the persons here attainted," said he, "have been proved traitors by such evidence as satisfies us. As to the rest we have followed common fame."

With such reckless barbarity was the list framed that fanatical royalists, who were, at that very time, hazarding their property, their liberty, their lives, in the cause of James, were not secure from proscription. The most learned man of whom the Jacobite party could boast was Henry Dodwell, Camdenian Professor in the University of Oxford. In the cause of hereditary monarchy he shrank from no sacrifice and from no danger. It was about him that William uttered those memorable words: "He has set his heart on being a martyr; and I have set mine on disappointing him." But James was more cruel to friends than William to foes. Dodwell was a Protestant: he had some property in Connaught: these crimes were sufficient; and he was set down in the long roll of those who were doomed to the gallows and the quartering block.

That James would give his assent to a bill which took from him the power of pardoning,

seemed to many persons impossible. He had, four years before, quarreled with the most loyal of parliaments rather than cede a prerogative which did not belong to him. It might, therefore, well be expected that he would now have struggled hard to retain a precious prerogative which had been enjoyed by his predecessors ever since the origin of the monarchy, and which even the Whigs allowed to be a power properly belonging to the Crown. The stern look and raised voice with which he had reprimanded the Tory gentlemen, who, in the language of profound reverence and fervent affection, implored him not to dispense with the laws, would now have been in place. He might also have seen that the right course was the wise course. Had he, on this great occasion, had the spirit to declare that he would not shed the blood of the innocent, and that, even as respected the guilty, he would not divest himself of the power of tempering judgment with mercy, he would have regained more hearts in England than he would have lost in Ireland. But it was ever his fate to resist where he should have yielded, and to yield where he should have resisted. The most wicked of all laws received his sanction; and it is but a very small extenuation of his guilt that his sanction was somewhat reluctantly given.

That nothing might be wanting to the completeness of this great crime, extreme care was taken to prevent the persons who were attainted from knowing that they were attainted, till the day of grace fixed in the Act was passed. The roll of names was not published, but kept carefully locked up in Fitton's closet. Some Protestants, who still adhered to the cause of James, but who were anxious to know whether any of their friends or relations had been proscribed, tried hard to obtain a sight of the list; but solicitation, remonstrance, even bribery, proved vain. Not a single copy got abroad till it was too late for any of the thousands who had been condemned without a trial to obtain a pardon.

Towards the close of July James prorogued the Houses. They had sat more than ten weeks; and in that space of time they had proved most fully that, great as have been the evils which Protestant ascendancy has produced in Ireland, the evils produced by Popish ascendancy would have been greater still. That the colonists, when they had won



the victory, grossly abused it, that their legislation was, during many years, unjust and tyrannical, is most true. But it is not less true that they never quite came up to the atrocious example set by their vanquished enemy during his short tenure of power.

Indeed, while James was loudly boasting that he had passed an Act granting entire liberty of conscience to all sects, a persecution as cruel as that of Languedoc was raging through all the provinces which owned his authority. It was said by those who wished to find an excuse for him that almost all the Protestants who still remained in Munster, Connaught, and Leinster were his enemies, and that it was not as schismatics, but as rebels in heart, who wanted only opportunity to become rebels in act, that he gave them up to be oppressed and despoiled; and to this excuse some weight might have been allowed if he had strenuously exerted himself to protect those few colonists, who, though firmly attached to the reformed religion, were still true to the doctrines of nonresistance and of indefeasible hereditary right. But even these devoted royalists found that their heresy was in his view a crime for which no services or sacrifices would atone. Three or four noblemen, members of the Anglican Church, who had welcomed him to Ireland, and had sat in his Parliament, represented to him that, if the rule which forbade any Protestant to possess any weapon were strictly enforced, their country houses would be at the mercy of the Rapparees, and obtained from him permission to keep arms sufficient for a few servants. But Avaux remonstrated. The indulgence, he said, was grossly abused: these Protestant lords were not to be trusted: they were turning their houses into fortresses: his Majesty would soon have reason to repent his goodness. These representations prevailed; and Roman Catholic troops were quartered in the suspected dwellings.

Still harder was the lot of those Protestant clergymen who continued to cling, with desperate fidelity, to the cause of the Lord's Anointed. Of all the Anglican divines the one who had the largest share of James's good graces seems to have been Cartwright. Whether Cartwright could long have continued to be a favorite without being an apostate may be doubted. He died a few weeks after his arrival in Ireland; and thence-

forward his church had no one to plead her cause. Nevertheless a few of her prelates and priests continued for a time to teach what they had taught in the days of the Exclusion Bill. But it was at the peril of life and limb that they exercised their functions. Every wearer of a cassock was a mark for the insults and outrages of soldiers and Rapparees. In the country his house was robbed, and he was fortunate if it was not burned over his head. He was hunted through the streets of Dublin with cries of "There goes the devil of a heretic." Sometimes he was knocked down: sometimes he was cudgelled. The rulers of the University of Dublin, trained in the Anglican doctrine of passive obedience, had greeted James on his first arrival at the Castle, and had been assured by him that he would protect them in the enjoyment of their property and their privileges. They were now, without any trial, without any accusation, thrust out of their house. The communion plate of the chapel, the books in the library, the very chairs and beds of the collegians were seized. Part of the building was turned into a magazine, part into a barrack, part into a prison. Simon Luttrell, who was Governor of the capital, was, with great difficulty and by powerful intercession, induced to let the ejected fellows and scholars depart in safety. He at length permitted them to remain at large, with this condition, that, on pain of death, no three of them should meet together. No Protestant divine suffered more hardships than Doctor William King, Dean of Saint Patrick's. He had been long distinguished by the fervor with which he had inculcated the duty of passively obeying even the worst rulers. At a later period, when he had published a defense of the Revolution, and had accepted a miter from the new government, he was reminded that he had invoked the divine vengeance on the usurpers, and had declared himself willing to die a hundred deaths rather than desert the cause of hereditary right. He had said that the true religion had often been strengthened by persecution, but could never be strengthened by rebellion; that it would be a glorious day for the Church of England when a whole cartload of her ministers should go to the gallows for the doctrine of nonresistance; and that his highest ambition was to be one of such a company. It is not improbable that, when he spoke thus,



he felt as he spoke. But his principles, though they might perhaps have held out against the severities and the promises of William, were not proof against the ingratitude of James. Human nature at last asserted its rights. 5 After King had been repeatedly imprisoned by the government to which he was devotedly attached, after he had been insulted and threatened in his own choir by the soldiers, after he had been interdicted from burying 10 in his own churchyard, and from preaching in his own pulpit, after he had narrowly escaped with life from a musketshot fired at him in the street, he began to think the Whig theory of government less unreasonable and unchristian than it had once appeared to him, and persuaded himself that the oppressed Church might lawfully accept deliverance, if God should be pleased, by whatever means, to send it to her.

In no long time it appeared that James would have done well to hearken to those counselors who had told him that the acts by which he was trying to make himself popular in one of his three kingdoms, would make 25 him odious in the others. It was in some sense fortunate for England that, after he had ceased to reign here, he continued during more than a year to reign in Ireland. The Revolution had been followed by a reaction of 30 public feeling in his favor. That reaction, if it had been suffered to proceed uninterrupted, might perhaps not have ceased till he was again King: but it was violently interrupted by himself. He would not suffer his people 35 to forget: he would not suffer them to hope: while they were trying to find excuses for his past errors, and to persuade themselves that he would not repeat these errors, he forced upon them, in their own despite, the conviction that he was incorrigible, that the sharpest discipline of adversity had taught him nothing, and that, if they were weak enough to recall him, they would soon have to depose him again. It was in vain that the Jacobites put 45 forth pamphlets about the cruelty with which he had been treated by those who were nearest to him in blood, about the imperious temper and uncourteous manners of William, about the favor shown to the Dutch, about the heavy taxes, about the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, about the dangers which threatened the Church from the enmity of Puritans and Latitudinarians. James refuted

these pamphlets far more effectually than all the ablest and most eloquent Whig writers united could have done. Every week came the news that he had passed some new Act for robbing or murdering Protestants. Every colonist who succeeded in stealing across the sea from Leinster to Holyhead or Bristol, brought fearful reports of the tyranny under which his brethren groaned. What impression 10 these reports made on the Protestants of our island may be easily inferred from the fact that they moved the indignation of Ronquillo, a Spaniard and a bigoted member of the Church of Rome. He informed his Court that, though the English laws against Popery 15 might seem severe, they were so much mitigated by the prudence and humanity of the Government, that they caused no annoyance to quiet people; and he took upon himself to 20 assure the Holy See that what a Roman Catholic suffered in London was nothing when compared with what a Protestant suffered in Ireland.

The fugitive Englishry found in England 25 warm sympathy and munificent relief. Many were received into the houses of friends and kinsmen. Many were indebted for the means of subsistence to the liberality of strangers. Among those who bore a part in this work of mercy, none contributed more largely or less ostentatiously than the Queen. The House of Commons placed at the King's disposal fifteen thousand pounds for the relief of those refugees whose wants were most pressing, 35 and requested him to give commissions in the army to those who were qualified for military employment. An Act was also passed enabling beneficed clergymen who had fled from Ireland to hold preferment in England. Yet the interest which the nation felt in these unfortunate guests was languid when compared with the interest excited by that portion of the Saxon colony which still maintained in Ulster a desperate conflict against 45 overwhelming odds. On this subject scarcely one dissentient voice was to be heard in our island. Whigs, Tories, nay even those Jacobites in whom Jacobitism had not extinguished every patriotic sentiment, gloried in the glory of Enniskillen and Londonderry. The House of Commons was all of one mind. "This is no time to be counting cost," said honest Birch, who well remembered the way in which Oliver had made war on the Irish. "Are those brave

fellows in Londonderry to be deserted? If we lose them will not all the world cry shame upon us? A boom across the river! Why have we not cut the boom in pieces? Are our brethren to perish almost in sight of England, within a few hours' voyage of our shores?" Howe, the most vehement man of one party, declared that the hearts of the people were set on Ireland. Seymour, the leader of the other party, declared that, though he had not taken part in setting up the new government, he should cordially support it in all that might be necessary for the preservation of Ireland. The Commons appointed a committee to inquire into the cause of the delays and miscarriages which had been all but fatal to the Englishry of Ulster. The officers to whose treachery or cowardice the public ascribed the calamities of Londonderry were put under arrest. Lundy was sent to the Tower, Cunningham to the Gate House. The agitation of the public mind was in some degree calmed by the announcement that, before the end of the summer, an army powerful enough to reestablish the English ascendancy in Ireland would be sent across Saint George's Channel, and that Schomberg would be the General. In the meantime an expedition which was thought to be sufficient for the relief of Londonderry was dispatched from Liverpool under the command of Kirke. The dogged obstinacy with which this man had, in spite of royal solicitations, adhered to his religion, and the part which he had taken in the Revolution, had perhaps entitled him to an amnesty for past crimes. But it is difficult to understand why the Government should have selected for a post of the highest importance an officer who was generally and justly hated, who had never shown eminent talents for war, and who, both in Africa and in England, had notoriously tolerated among his soldiers a licentiousness, not only shocking to humanity, but also incompatible with discipline.

On the sixteenth of May, Kirke's troops embarked: on the twenty-second they sailed: but contrary winds made the passage slow, and forced the armament to stop long at the Isle of Man. Meanwhile the Protestants of Ulster were defending themselves with stubborn courage against a great superiority of force. The Enniskilleners had never ceased to wage a vigorous partisan war against the native population. Early in May they

marched to encounter a large body of troops from Connaught, who had made an inroad into Donegal. The Irish were speedily routed, and fled to Sligo with the loss of a hundred and twenty men killed and sixty taken. Two small pieces of artillery and several horses fell into the hands of the conquerors. Elated by this success, the Enniskilleners soon invaded the county of Cavan, drove before them fifteen hundred of James's troops, took and destroyed the castle of Ballincarrig, reputed the strongest in that part of the kingdom, and carried off the pikes and muskets of the garrison. The next incursion was into Meath. Three thousand oxen and two thousand sheep were swept away and brought safe to the little island in Lough Erne. These daring exploits spread terror even to the gates of Dublin. Colonel Hugh Sutherland was ordered to march against Enniskillen with a regiment of dragoons and two regiments of foot. He carried with him arms for the native peasantry; and many repaired to his standard. The Enniskilleners did not wait till he came into their neighborhood, but advanced to encounter him. He declined an action, and retreated, leaving his stores at Belturbet under the care of a detachment of three hundred soldiers. The Protestants attacked Belturbet with vigor, made their way into a lofty house which overlooked the town, and thence opened such a fire that in two hours the garrison surrendered. Seven hundred muskets, a great quantity of powder, many horses, many sacks of biscuits, many barrels of meal, were taken, and were sent to Enniskillen. The boats which brought these precious spoils were joyfully welcomed. The fear of hunger was removed. While the aboriginal population had, in many counties, altogether neglected the cultivation of the earth, in the expectation, it should seem, that marauding would prove an inexhaustible resource, the colonists, true to the provident and industrious character of their race, had, in the midst of war, not omitted carefully to till the soil in the neighborhood of their strongholds. The harvest was now not far remote; and, till the harvest, the food taken from the enemy would be amply sufficient.

Yet, in the midst of success and plenty, the Enniskilleners were tortured by a cruel anxiety for Londonderry. They were bound



to the defenders of that city, not only by religious and national sympathy, but by common interest. For there could be no doubt that, if Londonderry fell, the whole Irish army would instantly march in irresistible force upon Lough Erne. Yet what could be done? Some brave men were for making a desperate attempt to relieve the besieged city; but the odds were too great. Detachments however were sent which infested the rear of the blockading army, cut off supplies, and, on one occasion, carried away the horses of three entire troops of cavalry. Still the line of posts which surrounded Londonderry by land remained unbroken. The river was still strictly closed and guarded. Within the walls the distress had become extreme. So early as the eighth of June horseflesh was almost the only meat which could be purchased; and of horseflesh the supply was scanty. It was necessary to make up the deficiency with tallow; and even tallow was doled out with a parsimonious hand.

On the fifteenth of June a gleam of hope appeared. The sentinels on the top of the Cathedral saw sails nine miles off in the bay of Lough Foyle. Thirty vessels of different sizes were counted. Signals were made from the steeples and returned from the mast heads, but were imperfectly understood on both sides. At last a messenger from the fleet eluded the Irish sentinels, dived under the boom, and informed the garrison that Kirke had arrived from England with troops, arms, ammunition, and provisions, to relieve the city.

In Londonderry expectation was at the height: but a few hours of feverish joy were followed by weeks of misery. Kirke thought it unsafe to make any attempt, either by land or by water, on the lines of the besiegers, and retired to the entrance of Lough Foyle, where, during several weeks, he lay inactive.

And now the pressure of famine became every day more severe. A strict search was made in all the recesses of all the houses of the city; and some provisions, which had been concealed in cellars by people who had since died or made their escape, were discovered and carried to the magazines. The stock of cannon balls was almost exhausted; and their place was supplied by brickbats coated with lead. Pestilence began, as usual, to make its appearance in the train of hunger. Fifteen

officers died of fever in one day. The Governor Baker was among those who sank under the disease. His place was supplied by Colonel John Mitchelburne.

Meanwhile it was known at Dublin that Kirke and his squadron were on the coast of Ulster. The alarm was great at the Castle. Even before this news arrived, Avaux had given it as his opinion that Richard Hamilton was unequal to the difficulties of the situation. It had therefore been resolved that Rosen should take the chief command. He was now sent down with all speed.

On the nineteenth of June he arrived at the headquarters of the besieging army. At first he attempted to undermine the walls; but his plan was discovered; and he was compelled to abandon it after a sharp fight, in which more than a hundred of his men were slain. Then his fury rose to a strange pitch. He, an old soldier, a Marshal of France in expectancy, trained in the school of the greatest generals, accustomed, during many years, to scientific war, to be baffled by a mob of country gentlemen, farmers, shopkeepers, who were protected only by a wall which any good engineer would at once have pronounced untenable! He raved, he blasphemed, in a language of his own, made up of all the dialects spoken from the Baltic to the Atlantic. He would raze the city to the ground: he would spare no living thing; no, not the young girls; not the babies at the breast. As to the leaders, death was too light a punishment for them: he would rack them: he would roast them alive. In his rage he ordered a shell to be flung into the town with a letter containing a horrible menace. He would, he said, gather into one body all the Protestants who had remained at their homes between Charlemont and the sea, old men, women, children, many of them near in blood and affection to the defenders of Londonderry. No protection, whatever might be the authority by which it had been given, should be respected. The multitude thus brought together should be driven under the walls of Londonderry, and should there be starved to death in the sight of their countrymen, their friends, their kinsmen. This was no idle threat. Parties were instantly sent out in all directions to collect victims. At dawn, on the morning of the second of July, hundreds of Protestants, who were charged with no crime, who were in-



capable of bearing arms, and many of whom had protections granted by James, were dragged to the gates of the city. It was imagined that the piteous sight would quell the spirit of the colonists. But the only effect was to rouse that spirit to still greater energy. An order was immediately put forth that no man should utter the word Surrender on pain of death; and no man uttered that word. Several prisoners of high rank were in the town. Hitherto they had been well treated, and had received as good rations as were measured out to the garrison. They were now closely confined. A gallows was erected on one of the bastions; and a message was conveyed to Rosen, requesting him to send a confessor instantly to prepare his friends for death. The prisoners in great dismay wrote to the savage Livonian, but received no answer. They then addressed themselves to their countryman, Richard Hamilton. They were willing, they said, to shed their blood for their King; but they thought it hard to die the ignominious death of thieves in consequence of the barbarity of their own companions in arms. Hamilton, though a man of lax principles, was not cruel. He had been disgusted by the inhumanity of Rosen, but, being only second in command, could not venture to express publicly all that he thought. He however remonstrated strongly. Some Irish officers felt on this occasion as it was natural that brave men should feel, and declared, weeping with pity and indignation, that they should never cease to have in their ears the cries of the poor women and children who had been driven at the point of the pike to die of famine between the camp and the city. Rosen persisted during forty-eight hours. In that time many unhappy creatures perished: but Londonderry held out as resolutely as ever; and he saw that his crime was likely to produce nothing but hatred and obloquy. He at length gave way, and suffered the survivors to withdraw. The garrison then took down the gallows which had been erected on the bastion.

When the tidings of these events reached Dublin, James, though by no means prone to compassion, was startled by an atrocity of which the civil wars of England had furnished no example, and was displeased by learning that protections, given by his authority, and guaranteed by his honor, had been publicly

declared to be nullities. He complained to the French ambassador, and said, with a warmth which the occasion fully justified, that Rosen was a barbarous Muscovite. Melfort could not refrain from adding that, if Rosen had been an Englishman, he would have been hanged. Avaux was utterly unable to understand this effeminate sensibility. In his opinion, nothing had been done that was at all reprehensible; and he had some difficulty in commanding himself when he heard the King and the secretary blame, in strong language, an act of wholesome severity. In truth the French ambassador and the French general were well paired. There was a great difference doubtless, in appearance and manner, between the handsome, graceful, and refined politician, whose dexterity and suavity had been renowned at the most polite courts of Europe, and the military adventurer, whose look and voice reminded all who came near him that he had been born in a half savage country, that he had risen from the ranks, and that he had once been sentenced to death for marauding. But the heart of the diplomatist was really even more callous than that of the soldier.

Rosen was recalled to Dublin; and Richard Hamilton was again left in the chief command. He tried gentler means than those which had brought so much reproach on his predecessor. No trick, no lie, which was thought likely to discourage the starving garrison was spared. One day a great shout was raised by the whole Irish camp. The defenders of Londonderry were soon informed that the army of James was rejoicing on account of the fall of Enniskillen. They were told that they had now no chance of being relieved, and were exhorted to save their lives by capitulating. They consented to negotiate. But what they asked was, that they should be permitted to depart armed and in military array, by land or by water at their choice. They demanded hostages for the exact fulfillment of these conditions, and insisted that the hostages should be sent on board of the fleet which lay in Lough Foyle. Such terms Hamilton durst not grant: the Governors would abate nothing: the treaty was broken off; and the conflict recommenced.

By this time July was far advanced; and the state of the city was, hour by hour, becoming more frightful. The number of the inhabi-

tants had been thinned more by famine and disease than by the fire of the enemy. Yet that fire was sharper and more constant than ever. One of the gates was beaten in: one of the bastions was laid in ruins; but the breaches made by day were repaired by night with indefatigable activity. Every attack was still repelled. But the fighting men of the garrison were so much exhausted that they could scarcely keep their legs. Several of them, in the act of striking at the enemy, fell down from mere weakness. A very small quantity of grain remained, and was doled out by mouthfuls. The stock of salted hides was considerable, and by gnawing them the garrison appeased the rage of hunger. Dogs, fattened on the blood of the slain who lay unburied round the town, were luxuries which few could afford to purchase. The price of a whelp's paw was five shillings and sixpence. Nine horses were still alive, and but barely alive. They were so lean that little meat was likely to be found upon them. It was, however, determined to slaughter them for food. The people perished so fast that it was impossible for the survivors to perform the rites of sepulture. There was scarcely a cellar in which some corpse was not decaying. Such was the extremity of distress, that the rats who came to feast in those hideous dens were eagerly hunted and greedily devoured. A small fish, caught in the river, was not to be purchased with money. The only price for which such a treasure could be obtained was some handfuls of oatmeal. Leprosies, such as strange and unwholesome diet engenders, made existence a constant torment. The whole city was poisoned by the stench exhaled from the bodies of the dead and of the half dead. That there should be fits of discontent and insubordination among men enduring such misery was inevitable. At one moment it was suspected that Walker had laid up somewhere a secret store of food, and was revelling in private, while he exhorted others to suffer resolutely for the good cause. His house was strictly examined: his innocence was fully proved: he regained his popularity; and the garrison, with death in near prospect, thronged to the cathedral to hear him preach, drank in his earnest eloquence with delight, and went forth from the house of God with haggard faces and tottering steps, but with spirit still unsubdued. There were,

indeed, some secret plottings. A very few obscure traitors opened communications with the enemy. But it was necessary that all such dealings should be carefully concealed. None dared to utter publicly any words save words of defiance and stubborn resolution. Even in that extremity the general cry was "No surrender." And there were not wanting voices which, in low tones, added, "First the horses and hides; and then the prisoners; and then each other." It was afterwards related, half in jest, yet not without a horrible mixture of earnest, that a corpulent citizen, whose bulk presented a strange contrast to the skeletons which surrounded him, thought it expedient to conceal himself from the numerous eyes which followed him with cannibal looks whenever he appeared in the streets.

It was no slight aggravation of the sufferings of the garrison that all this time the English ships were seen far off in Lough Foyle. Communication between the fleet and the city was almost impossible. One diver who had attempted to pass the boom was drowned. Another was hanged. The language of signals was hardly intelligible. On the thirteenth of July, however, a piece of paper sewed up in a cloth button came to Walker's hands. It was a letter from Kirke, and contained assurances of speedy relief. But more than a fortnight of intense misery had since elapsed; and the hearts of the most sanguine were sick with deferred hope. By no art could the provisions which were left be made to hold out two days more.

Just at this time Kirke received from England a dispatch, which contained positive orders that Londonderry should be relieved. He accordingly determined to make an attempt which, as far as appears, he might have made, with at least an equally fair prospect of success, six weeks earlier.

Among the merchant ships which had come to Lough Foyle under his convoy was one called the Mountjoy. The master, Micaiah Browning, a native of Londonderry, had brought from England a large cargo of provisions. He had, it is said, repeatedly remonstrated against the inaction of the armament. He now eagerly volunteered to take the first risk of succoring his fellow citizens; and his offer was accepted. Andrew Douglas, master of the Phoenix, who had on board a great quantity of meal from Scotland,



was willing to share the danger and the honor. The two merchantmen were to be escorted by the Dartmouth, a frigate of thirty-six guns, commanded by Captain John Leake, afterwards an admiral of great fame.

It was the twenty-eighth of July. The sun had just set: the evening sermon in the cathedral was over; and the heartbroken congregation had separated, when the sentinels on the tower saw the sails of three vessels coming up the Foyle. Soon there was a stir in the Irish camp. The besiegers were on the alert for miles along both shores. The ships were in extreme peril: for the river was low; and the only navigable channel ran very near to the left bank, where the headquarters of the enemy had been fixed, and where the batteries were most numerous. Leake performed his duty with a skill and spirit worthy of his noble profession, exposed his frigate to cover the merchantmen, and used his guns with great effect. At length the little squadron came to the place of peril. Then the Mountjoy took the lead, and went right at the boom. The huge barricade cracked and gave way: but the shock was such that the Mountjoy rebounded, and stuck in the mud. A yell of triumph rose from the banks: the Irish rushed to their boats, and were preparing to board; but the Dartmouth poured on them a well directed broadside, which threw them into disorder. Just then the Phoenix dashed at the breach which the Mountjoy had made, and was in a moment within the fence. Meantime the tide was rising fast. The Mountjoy began to move, and soon passed safe through the broken stakes and floating spars. But her brave master was no more. A shot from one of the batteries had struck him; and he died by the most enviable of all deaths, in sight of the city which was his birthplace, which was his home, and which had just been saved by his courage and self-devotion from the most frightful form of destruction. The night had closed in before the conflict at the boom began; but the flash of the guns was seen, and the noise heard, by the lean and ghastly multitude which covered the walls of the city. When the Mountjoy grounded, and when the shout of triumph rose from the Irish on both sides of the river, the hearts of the besieged died within them. One who endured the unutterable anguish of that moment has told us that they looked

fearfully livid in each other's eyes. Even after the barricade had been passed, there was a terrible half hour of suspense. It was ten o'clock before the ships arrived at the quay. The whole population was there to welcome them. A screen made of casks filled with earth was hastily thrown up to protect the landing place from the batteries on the other side of the river; and then the work of unloading began. First were rolled on shore barrels containing six thousand bushels of meal. Then came great cheeses, casks of beef, flitches of bacon, kegs of butter, sacks of pease and biscuit, ankers of brandy. Not many hours before, half a pound of tallow and three quarters of a pound of salted hide had been weighed out with niggardly care to every fighting man. The ration which each now received was three pounds of flour, two pounds of beef, and a pint of pease. It is easy to imagine with what tears grace was said over the suppers of that evening. There was little sleep on either side of the wall. The bonfires shone bright along the whole circuit of the ramparts. The Irish guns continued to roar all night; and all night the bells of the rescued city made answer to the Irish guns with a peal of joyous defiance. Through the three following days the batteries of the enemy continued to play. But, on the third night, flames were seen arising from the camp; and, when the first of August dawned, a line of smoking ruins marked the site lately occupied by the huts of the besiegers; and the citizens saw far off the long column of pikes and standards retreating up the left bank of the Foyle towards Strabane.

So ended this great siege, the most memorable in the annals of the British isles. It had lasted a hundred and five days. The garrison had been reduced from about seven thousand effective men to about three thousand. The loss of the besiegers cannot be precisely ascertained. Walker estimated it at eight thousand men. It is certain from the dispatches of Avaux that the regiments which returned from the blockade had been so much thinned that many of them were not more than two hundred strong. Of thirty-six French gunners who had superintended the cannonading, thirty-one had been killed or disabled. The means both of attack and of defense had undoubtedly been such as would have moved the great warriors of the Conti-



ment to laughter; and this is the very circumstance which gives so peculiar an interest to the history of the contest. It was a contest, not between engineers, but between nations; and the victory remained with the nation which, though inferior in number, was superior in civilization, in capacity for self-government, and in stubbornness of resolution.

As soon as it was known that the Irish army had retired, a deputation from the city hastened to Lough Foyle, and invited Kirke to take the command. He came accompanied by a long train of officers, and was received in state by the two Governors, who delivered up to him the authority which, under the pressure of necessity, they had assumed. He remained only a few days; but he had time to show enough of the incurable vices of his character to disgust a population distinguished by austere morals and ardent public spirit. There was, however, no outbreak. The city was in the highest good humor. Such quantities of provisions had been landed from the fleet, that there was in every house a plenty never before known. A few days earlier a man had been glad to obtain for twenty pence a mouthful of carrion scraped from the bones of a starved horse. A pound of good beef was now sold for three halfpence. Meanwhile all hands were busied in removing corpses which had been thinly covered with earth, in filling up the holes which the shells had plowed in the ground, and in repairing the battered roofs of the houses. The recollection of past dangers and privations, and the consciousness of having deserved well of the English nation and of all Protestant Churches, swelled the hearts of the townspeople with honest pride. That pride grew stronger when they received from William a letter acknowledging, in the most affectionate language, the debt which he owed to the brave and trusty citizens of his good city. The whole population crowded to the Diamond to hear the royal epistle read. At the close all the guns on the ramparts sent forth a voice of joy: all the ships in the river made answer: barrels of ale were broken up; and the health of their Majesties was drunk with shouts and volleys of musketry.

Five generations have since passed away; and still the wall of Londonderry is to the Protestants of Ulster what the trophy of Marathon was to the Athenians. A lofty pillar, rising

from a bastion which bore during many weeks the heaviest fire of the enemy, is seen far up and far down the Foyle. On the summit is the statue of Walker, such as when, in the last and most terrible emergency, his eloquence roused the fainting courage of his brethren. In one hand he grasps a Bible. The other, pointing down the river, seems to direct the eyes of his famished audience to the English topmasts in the distant bay. Such a monument was well deserved: yet it was scarcely needed: for in truth the whole city is to this day a monument of the great deliverance. The wall is carefully preserved; nor would any plea of health or convenience be held by the inhabitants sufficient to justify the demolition of that sacred enclosure which, in the evil time, gave shelter to their race and their religion. The summit of the ramparts forms a pleasant walk. The bastions have been turned into little gardens. Here and there, among the shrubs and flowers, may be seen the old culverins which scattered bricks, cased with lead, among the Irish ranks. One antique gun, the gift of the Fishmongers of London, was distinguished, during the hundred and five memorable days, by the loudness of its report, and still bears the name of Roaring Meg. The cathedral is filled with relics and trophies. In the vestibule is a huge shell, one of many hundreds of shells which were thrown into the city. Over the altar are still seen the French flagstaves, taken by the garrison in a desperate sally. The white ensigns of the House of Bourbon have long been dust: but their place has been supplied by new banners, the work of the fairest hands of Ulster. The anniversary of the day on which the gates were closed, and the anniversary of the day on which the siege was raised, have been down to our own time celebrated by salutes, processions, banquets, and sermons: Lundy has been executed in effigy; and the sword, said by tradition to be that of Maumont, has, on great occasions, been carried in triumph. There is still a Walker Club and a Murray Club. The humble tombs of the Protestant captains have been carefully sought out, repaired, and embellished. It is impossible not to respect the sentiment which indicates itself by these tokens. It is a sentiment which belongs to the higher and purer part of human nature, and which adds not a little to the strength of states. A people

which takes no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants. Yet it is impossible for the moralist or the statesman to look with unmixed complacency on the solemnities with which Londonderry commemorates her deliverance, and on the honors which she pays to those who saved her. Unhappily the animosities of her brave champions have descended with their glory. The faults which are ordinarily found in dominant castes and dominant sects have not seldom shown themselves without disguise at her festivities; and even with the expressions of pious gratitude which have resounded from her pulpits have too often been mingled words of wrath and defiance.

The Irish army which had retreated to Strabane remained there but a very short time. The spirit of the troops had been depressed by their recent failure, and was soon completely cowed by the news of a great disaster in another quarter.

Three weeks before this time the Duke of Berwick had gained an advantage over a detachment of the Enniskilleners, and had, by their own confession, killed or taken more than fifty of them. They were in hopes of obtaining some assistance from Kirke, to whom they had sent a deputation; and they still persisted in rejecting all terms offered by the enemy. It was therefore determined at Dublin that an attack should be made upon them from several quarters at once. Macarthy, who had been rewarded for his services in Munster with the title of Viscount Mountcashel, marched towards Lough Erne from the east with three regiments of foot, two regiments of dragoons, and some troops of cavalry. A considerable force, which lay encamped near the mouth of the river Drowes, was at the same time to advance from the west. The Duke of Berwick was to come from the north, with such horse and dragoons as could be spared from the army which was besieging Londonderry. The Enniskilleners were not fully apprised of the whole plan which had been laid for their destruction; but they knew that Macarthy was on the road with a force exceeding any which they could bring into the field. Their anxiety was in some degree relieved by the return of the deputation which they had sent to Kirke. Kirke

could spare no soldiers; but he had sent some arms, some ammunition, and some experienced officers, of whom the chief were Colonel Wolseley and Lieutenant Colonel Berry. These officers had come by sea round the coast of Donegal, and had run up the Erne. On Sunday, the twenty-ninth of July, it was known that their boat was approaching the island of Enniskillen. The whole population, male and female, came to the shore to greet them. It was with difficulty that they made their way to the Castle through the crowds which hung on them, blessing God that dear old England had not quite forgotten the Englishmen who were upholding her cause against great odds in the heart of Ireland.

Wolseley seems to have been in every respect well qualified for his post. He was a staunch Protestant, had distinguished himself among the Yorkshiremen who rose up for the Prince of Orange and a free Parliament, and had, even before the landing of the Dutch army, proved his zeal for liberty and pure religion, by causing the Mayor of Scarborough who had made a speech in favor of King James, to be brought into the market place and well tossed there in a blanket. This vehement hatred of Popery was, in the estimation of the men of Enniskillen, the first of all the qualifications of a leader; and Wolseley had other and more important qualifications. Though himself regularly bred to war, he seems to have had a peculiar aptitude for the management of irregular troops. He had scarcely taken on himself the chief command when he received notice that Mountcashel had laid siege to the Castle of Crum. Crum was the frontier garrison of the Protestants of Fermanagh. The ruins of the old fortifications are now among the attractions of a beautiful pleasure-ground, situated on a woody promontory which overlooks Lough Erne. Wolseley determined to raise the siege. He sent Berry forward with such troops as could be instantly put in motion, and promised to follow speedily with a larger force.

Berry, after marching some miles, encountered thirteen companies of Macarthy's dragoons commanded by Anthony, the most brilliant and accomplished of all who bore the name of Hamilton, but much less successful as a soldier than as a courtier, a lover, and a writer. Hamilton's dragoons ran at the first fire: he was severely wounded; and his



second in command was shot dead. Macarthy soon came up to support Hamilton; and at the same time Wolseley came up to support Berry. The hostile armies were now in presence of each other. Macarthy had above five thousand men and several pieces of artillery. The Enniskilleners were under three thousand; and they had marched in such haste that they had brought only one day's provisions. It was therefore absolutely necessary for them either to fight instantly or to retreat. Wolseley determined to consult the men; and this determination, which, in ordinary circumstances, would have been most unworthy of a general, was fully justified by the peculiar composition and temper of the little army, an army made up of gentlemen and yeomen fighting, not for pay, but for their lands, their wives, their children, and their God. The ranks were drawn up under arms; and the question was put, "Advance or Retreat?" The answer was an universal shout of "Advance." Wolseley gave out the word, "No Popery." It was received with loud applause. He instantly made his dispositions for an attack. As he approached, the enemy, to his great surprise, began to retire. The Enniskilleners were eager to pursue with all speed: but their commander, suspecting a snare, restrained their ardor, and positively forbade them to break their ranks. Thus one army retreated and the other followed, in good order, through the little town of Newton Butler. About a mile from that town the Irish faced about, and made a stand. Their position was well chosen. They were drawn up on a hill at the foot of which lay a deep bog. A narrow paved causeway which ran across the bog was the only road by which the cavalry of the Enniskilleners could advance; for on the right and left were pools, turf pits, and quagmires, which afforded no footing to horses. Macarthy placed his cannon in such a manner as to sweep this causeway.

Wolseley ordered his infantry to the attack. They struggled through the bog, made their way to firm ground, and rushed on the guns. There was then a short and desperate fight. The Irish cannoneers stood gallantly to their pieces till they were cut down to a man. The Enniskillen horse, no longer in danger of being mowed down by the fire of the artillery, came fast up the causeway. The Irish dragoons who had run away in the morning were smit-

ten with another panic, and, without striking a blow, galloped from the field. The horse followed the example. Such was the terror of the fugitives that many of them spurred hard till their beasts fell down, and then continued to fly on foot, throwing away carbines, swords, and even coats as encumbrances. The infantry, seeing themselves deserted, flung down their pikes and muskets and ran for their lives. The conquerors now gave loose to that ferocity which has seldom failed to disgrace the civil wars of Ireland. The butchery was terrible. Near fifteen hundred of the vanquished were put to the sword. About five hundred more, in ignorance of the country, took a road which led to Lough Erne. The lake was before them: the enemy behind: they plunged into the waters and perished there. Macarthy, abandoned by his troops, rushed into the midst of the pursuers and very nearly found the death which he sought. He was wounded in several places: he was struck to the ground; and in another moment his brains would have been knocked out with the butt end of a musket, when he was recognized and saved. The colonists lost only twenty men killed and fifty wounded. They took four hundred prisoners, seven pieces of cannon, fourteen barrels of powder, all the drums and all the colors of the vanquished enemy.

The battle of Newton Butler was won on the third day after the boom thrown over the Foyle was broken. At Strabane the news met the Celtic army which was retreating from Londonderry. All was terror and confusion: the tents were struck: the military stores were flung by wagon loads into the waters of the Mourne; and the dismayed Irish, leaving many sick and wounded to the mercy of the victorious Protestants, fled to Omagh, and thence to Charlemont. Sarsfield, who commanded at Sligo, found it necessary to abandon that town, which was instantly occupied by a detachment of Kirke's troops. Dublin was in consternation. James dropped words which indicated an intention of flying to the Continent. Evil tidings indeed came fast upon him. Almost at the same time at which he learned that one of his armies had raised the siege of Londonderry, and that another had been routed at Newton Butler, he received intelligence scarcely less disheartening from Scotland. \* \* \*



## JOHN HENRY, CARDINAL NEWMAN (1801-1890)

Newman was born in London on 21 February, 1801. His father was a banker and a man of cultivated interests; his mother was a descendant of French Huguenots who had come to England after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). In his childhood he received religious training which may be described as a "modified Calvinism," and from an early time he was familiar with the Authorized Version of the Bible, but there is nothing in his ancestry or training which accounts for the strong sense of immaterial reality which he had even as a boy, and which contained the germs of his later development. As a child, he tells us, "I used to wish the Arabian Tales were true; my imagination ran on unknown influences, on magical powers, and talismans. . . . I thought life might be a dream, or I an Angel, and all this world a deception, my fellow-angels by a playful device concealing themselves from me, and deceiving me with the semblance of a material world." This was not a mere passing fancy with him, but an early manifestation of a conviction of immaterial reality which was later strengthened by such apparently diverse influences as the tales of Sir Walter Scott and the theological treatises of Thomas Scott, and which, deepened after his experience of "conversion" at fifteen, remained his abiding possession. He says that his religious studies at fifteen and in years immediately following aided "in isolating me from the objects which surrounded me, in confirming me in my mistrust of the reality of material phenomena, and making me rest in the thought of two and two only supreme and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator."

Newman received his secondary education at a school in Ealing, and went thence to Trinity College, Oxford, in 1816. He received his B.A. in 1820. In 1822 he was elected a Fellow of Oriel College and two years later he was ordained a deacon in the Church of England. In 1825 he was ordained a priest and in the following year became one of the tutors of his college. About this time he also preached his first university sermon, and in 1828 he became vicar of St. Mary's Church, Oxford. This remained his outward position for a number of years. Newman's nature was closely akin to Coleridge's and Carlyle's. He heard the same inner voice that they heard, telling him of truths beyond the ken of rationalists and scientists. In his case this experience took the form of a living sense of the truth of Christianity very different from the largely formal profes-

sions of faith then usual in the Anglican Church outside of the evangelical party. Newman, moreover, saw with remarkable clearness the character and strength of the forces which were to oppose Christianity in the nineteenth century, and he consecrated his life to warfare against liberalism, as he called it, or rationalism. For this purpose he deemed it essential that the Anglican Church should be aroused from its lethargy and awakened to a full sense of the unbroken Christian tradition which it claimed to represent. This was the starting-point of the Oxford Movement, of which Newman was the leading spirit. Newman held that the "campaign" actually began with a sermon preached by John Keble in Oxford in 1833. In this sermon Keble termed an anti-clerical act of Parliament an act of national apostasy. The sermon was quickly followed by the first of the famous series of ninety *Tracts for the Times*. In these tracts and in other ways Newman and his associates sought to emphasize the Catholic doctrines of the Anglican Church and to demonstrate that that Church was really the modern representative of Christianity as it had existed in earlier days before the degeneracy and corruption of the Roman Church had brought about the Reformation. In the course of his studies, however, Newman gradually became convinced that, despite the corruption and idolatry of Rome, the English Reformation had been an act of schism, and at the same time he had it forcibly borne in upon him that the Anglican Church would not follow him in his conclusion. The result was that in 1845 Newman himself went over to the Roman Catholic Church. He had by this time become a national figure whose every movement was watched with deep interest and fear, and it is hardly too much to say that for a time the fate of the Church of England seemed to depend upon his actions.

In the early eighteen-fifties there was a movement on foot to establish a Catholic University in Dublin. In 1852, as a means of preparation for this, Newman delivered in Dublin a course of lectures *On the Scope and Nature of University Education*, later published with other papers as *The Idea of a University*. These lectures well illustrate the felicity of Newman's prose style and have, in addition, been generally recognized as a classic statement of the meaning of a liberal education. From 1854 until 1858 Newman was Rector of the new Catholic University, but the enterprise was in the end a failure. Newman's

career in the Catholic Church was in fact outwardly a series of disappointments until late in his life, because he was misunderstood and distrusted by some of his ecclesiastical superiors. In addition he was, in the years after 1845, regarded with dislike by Englishmen in general because of the effort they felt he had made to destroy the Anglican Church. But in 1864 he was egregiously attacked by Charles Kingsley—"a popular writer, more remarkable for vigorous writing than vigorous thought"—who published an assertion that Newman had countenanced falsehood on the part of the Roman clergy, and the latter immediately took advantage of this

opportunity both to clear his name and to explain to the English public the development of his religious opinions. This he did in his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, a justly famous book written with transparent candor and sincerity. In his old age Newman received honors both from England and from Rome which indicate the position he had attained as the greatest English religious leader of the nineteenth century. In 1877 he was elected an Honorary Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and in 1879 was created a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. He died on 11 August, 1890, and was buried at Rednal.

## THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY

### DISCOURSE VI<sup>1</sup>

#### LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE VIEWED IN RELATION TO LEARNING

IT WERE well if the English, like the Greek language, possessed some definite word to express, simply and generally, intellectual proficiency or perfection, such as "health," as used with reference to the animal frame, and "virtue," with reference to our moral nature. I am not able to find such a term;—talent, ability, genius, belong distinctly to the raw material, which is the subject-matter, not to that excellence which is the result of exercise and training. When we turn, indeed, to the particular kinds of intellectual perfection, words are forthcoming for our purpose, as, for instance, judgment, taste, and skill; yet even these belong, for the most part, to powers or habits bearing upon practice or upon art, and not to any perfect condition of the intellect, considered in itself. Wisdom, again, which is a more comprehensive word than any other, certainly has a direct relation to conduct and to human life. Knowledge, indeed, and science express purely intellectual ideas, but still not a state or habit of the intellect; for knowledge, in its ordinary sense, is but one of its circumstances, denoting a possession or a faculty; and science has been appropriated to the subject-matter of the intellect, instead of belonging at present, as it

ought to do, to the intellect itself. The consequence is that, on an occasion like this, many words are necessary, in order, first, to bring out and convey what surely is no difficult idea in itself—that of the cultivation of the intellect as an end; next, in order to recommend what surely is no unreasonable object; and lastly, to describe and make the mind realize the particular perfection in which that object consists. Every one knows practically what are the constituents of health or of virtue; and every one recognizes health and virtue as ends to be pursued; it is otherwise with intellectual excellence, and this must be my excuse, if I seem to any one to be bestowing a good deal of labor on a preliminary matter.

In default of a recognized term, I have called the perfection or virtue of the intellect by the name of philosophy, philosophical knowledge, enlargement of mind, or illumination; terms which are not uncommonly given to it by writers of this day: but, whatever name we bestow on it, it is, I believe, as a matter of history, the business of a university to make this intellectual culture its direct scope, or to employ itself in the education of the intellect—just as the work of a hospital lies in healing the sick or wounded; of a riding or fencing school, or of a gymnasium, in exercising the limbs; of an almshouse, in aiding and solacing the old; of an orphanage, in protecting innocence; of a penitentiary, in restoring the guilty. I say a university, taken in its bare idea, and before we view it as an instrument of the Church, has this object and this mission; it contemplates neither moral impression nor mechanical production; it professes to exercise the mind neither in art nor in duty; its function is intellectual cul-

<sup>1</sup>The two Discourses here printed are given the numbers by which they are generally referred to, but they are taken from the revised edition of 1850 (where they are differently numbered), not from the first edition of 1852. They are reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green, and Company, Newman's authorized publishers.

ture: here it may leave its scholars, and it has done its work when it has done as much as this. It educates the intellect to reason well in all matters, to reach out towards truth, and to grasp it.

This, I said in my foregoing Discourse, was the object of a university, viewed in itself, and apart from the Catholic Church, or from the state, or from any other power which may use it; and I illustrated this in various ways. I said that the intellect must have an excellence of its own, for there was nothing which had not its specific good; that the word "educate" would not be used of intellectual culture, as it is used, had not the intellect had an end of its own; that, had it not such an end, there would be no meaning in calling certain intellectual exercises "liberal," in contrast with "useful," as is commonly done; that the very notion of a philosophical temper implied it, for it threw us back upon research and system as ends in themselves, distinct from effects and works of any kind; that a philosophical scheme of knowledge, or system of sciences, could not, from the nature of the case, issue in any one definite art or pursuit, as its end; and that, on the other hand, the discovery and contemplation of truth, to which research and systematizing led, were surely sufficient ends, though nothing beyond them were added, and that they had ever been accounted sufficient by mankind.

Here then I take up the subject; and having determined that the cultivation of the intellect is an end distinct and sufficient in itself, and that, so far as words go it is an enlargement or illumination, I proceed to inquire what this mental breadth, or power, or light, or philosophy consists in. A hospital heals a broken limb or cures a fever; what does an institution effect, which professes the health, not of the body, not of the soul, but of the intellect? What is this good, which in former times, as well as our own, has been found worth the notice, the appropriation, of the Catholic Church?

I have then to investigate, in the Discourses which follow, those qualities and characteristics of the intellect in which its cultivation issues or rather consists; and, with a view of assisting myself in this undertaking, I shall recur to certain questions which have already been touched upon. These

questions are three: *viz.*, the relation of intellectual culture, first, to *mere* knowledge; secondly, to *professional* knowledge; and thirdly, to *religious* knowledge. In other words, are *acquirements* and *attainments* the scope of a university education? or *expertness in particular arts and pursuits*? or *moral and religious proficiency*? or something besides these three? These questions I shall examine in succession, with the purpose I have mentioned; and I hope to be excused if, in this anxious undertaking, I am led to repeat what, either in these Discourses or elsewhere, I have already put upon paper. And first, of *mere knowledge*, or learning, and its connection with intellectual illumination or philosophy.

I suppose the *primâ-faciè* view which the public at large would take of a university, considered as a place of education, is nothing more or less than a place for acquiring a great deal of knowledge on a great many subjects. Memory is one of the first developed of the mental faculties; a boy's business when he goes to school is to learn, that is, to store up things in his memory. For some years his intellect is little more than an instrument for taking in facts, or a receptacle for storing them; he welcomes them as fast as they come to him; he lives on what is without; he has his eyes ever about him; he has a lively susceptibility of impressions; he imbibes information of every kind; and little does he make his own in a true sense of the word, living rather upon his neighbors all around him. He has opinions, religious, political, and literary, and, for a boy, is very positive in them and sure about them; but he gets them from his schoolfellows, or his masters, or his parents, as the case may be. Such as he is in his other relations, such also is he in his school exercises; his mind is observant, sharp, ready, retentive; he is almost passive in the acquisition of knowledge. I say this in no disparagement of the idea of a clever boy. Geography, chronology, history, language, natural history, he heaps up the matter of these studies as treasures for a future day. It is the seven years of plenty with him: he gathers in by handfuls, like the Egyptians, without counting; and though, as time goes on, there is exercise for his argumentative powers in the elements of mathematics, and for his

<sup>1</sup>Superficial.



taste in the poets and orators, still, while at school, or at least, till quite the last years of his time, he acquires, and little more; and when he is leaving for the university, he is mainly the creature of foreign influences and circumstances, and made up of accidents, homogeneous or not, as the case may be. Moreover, the moral habits, which are a boy's praise, encourage and assist this result; that is, diligence, assiduity, regularity, dispatch, persevering application; for these are the direct conditions of acquisition, and naturally lead to it. Acquirements, again, are emphatically producible, and at a moment; they are a something to show, both for master and scholar; an audience, even though ignorant themselves of the subjects of an examination, can comprehend when questions are answered and when they are not. Here again is a reason why mental culture should in the minds of men be identified with the acquisition of knowledge.

The same notion possesses the public mind, when it passes on from the thought of a school to that of a university: and with the best of reasons so far as this, that there is no true culture without acquirements, and that philosophy presupposes knowledge. It requires a great deal of reading, or a wide range of information, to warrant us in putting forth our opinions on any serious subject; and without such learning the most original mind may be able indeed to dazzle, to amuse, to refute, to perplex, but not to come to any useful result or any trustworthy conclusion. There are indeed persons who profess a different view of the matter, and even act upon it. Every now and then you will find a person of vigorous or fertile mind, who relies upon his own resources, despises all former authors, and gives the world, with the utmost fearlessness, his views upon religion, or history, or any other popular subject. And his works may sell for a while; he may get a name in his day; but this will be all. His readers are sure to find in the long run that his doctrines are mere theories, and not the expression of facts, that they are chaff instead of bread, and then his popularity drops as suddenly as it rose.

Knowledge, then, is the indispensable condition of expansion of mind, and the instrument of attaining to it; this cannot be denied, it is ever to be insisted on; I begin with it as a first principle; however, the very truth of it

carries men too far, and confirms to them the notion that it is the whole of it. A narrow mind is thought to be that which contains little knowledge; and an enlarged mind, that which holds a deal; and what seems to put the matter beyond dispute is, the fact of the number of studies which are pursued in a university, by its very profession. Lectures are given on every kind of subject; examinations are held; prizes awarded. There are moral, metaphysical, physical professors; professors of languages, of history, of mathematics, of experimental science. Lists of questions are published, wonderful for their range and depth, variety and difficulty; treatises are written, which carry upon their very face the evidence of extensive reading or multifarious information; what then is wanted for mental culture to a person of large reading and scientific attainments? what is grasp of mind but acquirement? where shall philosophical repose be found, but in the consciousness and enjoyment of large intellectual possessions?

And yet this notion is, I conceive, a mistake, and my present business is to show that it is one, and that the end of a liberal education is not mere knowledge, or knowledge considered in its *matter*; and I shall best attain my object by actually setting down some cases, which will be generally granted to be instances of the process of enlightenment or enlargement of mind, and others which are not, and thus, by the comparison, you will be able to judge for yourselves, gentlemen, whether knowledge, that is, acquirement, is after all the real principle of the enlargement, or whether that principle is not rather something beyond it.

For instance, let a person, whose experience has hitherto been confined to the more calm and unpretending scenery of these islands, whether here or in England, go for the first time into parts where physical nature puts on her wilder and more awful forms, whether at home or abroad, as into mountainous districts; or let one, who has ever lived in a quiet village, go for the first time to a great metropolis—then I suppose he will have a sensation which perhaps he never had before. He has a feeling not in addition or increase of former feelings, but of something different in its nature. He will perhaps be borne forward, and find for a time that he has lost his bear-

ings. He has made a certain progress, and he has a consciousness of mental enlargement; he does not stand where he did, he has a new center, and a range of thoughts to which he was before a stranger.

Again, the view of the heavens which the telescope opens upon us, if allowed to fill and possess the mind, may almost whirl it round and make it dizzy. It brings in a flood of ideas, and is rightly called an intellectual enlargement, whatever is meant by the term.

And so again, the sight of beasts of prey and other foreign animals, their strangeness, the originality (if I may use the term) of their forms and gestures and habits and their variety and independence of each other, throw us out of ourselves into another creation, and as if under another Creator, if I may so express the temptation which may come on the mind. We seem to have new faculties, or a new exercise for our faculties, by this addition to our knowledge; like a prisoner who, having been accustomed to wear manacles or fetters, suddenly finds his arms and legs free.

Hence physical science generally, in all its departments, as bringing before us the exuberant riches and resources, yet the orderly course, of the universe, elevates and excites the student, and at first, I may say, almost takes away his breath, while in time it exercises a tranquillizing influence upon him.

Again, the study of history is said to enlarge and enlighten the mind, and why? because, as I conceive, it gives it a power of judging of passing events, and of all events, and a conscious superiority over them which before it did not possess.

And in like manner, what is called seeing the world, entering into active life, going into society, traveling, gaining acquaintance with the various classes of the community, coming into contact with the principles and modes of thought of various parties, interests, and races, their views, aims, habits, and manners, their religious creeds and forms of worship—gaining experience how various yet how alike men are, how low-minded, how bad, how opposed, yet how confident in their opinions; all this exerts a perceptible influence upon the mind, which it is impossible to mistake, be it good or be it bad, and is popularly called its enlargement.

And then again, the first time the mind comes across the arguments and speculations

of unbelievers, and feels what a novel light they cast upon what he has hitherto accounted sacred; and still more, if it gives in to them and embraces them, and throws off as so much prejudice what it has hitherto held, and, as if waking from a dream, begins to realize to its imagination that there is now no such thing as law and the transgression of law, that sin is a phantom, and punishment a bugbear, that it is free to sin, free to enjoy the world and the flesh; and still further, when it does enjoy them, and reflects that it may think and hold just what it will, that "the world is all before it where to choose,"<sup>1</sup> and what system to build up as its own private persuasion; when this torrent of bad thoughts rushes over and inundates it, who will deny that the fruit of the tree of knowledge, or what the mind takes for knowledge, has made it one of the gods, with a sense of expansion and elevation—an intoxication in reality, still, so far as the subjective state of the mind goes, an illumination? Hence the fanaticism of individuals or nations, who suddenly cast off their Maker. Their eyes are opened, and, like the judgment-stricken king in the tragedy,<sup>2</sup> they see two suns, and a magic universe, out of which they look back upon their former state of faith and innocence with a sort of contempt and indignation, as if they were then but fools, and the dupes of imposture.

On the other hand, religion has its own enlargement, and an enlargement, not of tumult, but of peace. It is often remarked of uneducated persons, who have hitherto thought little of the unseen world, that, on their turning to God, looking into themselves, regulating their hearts, reforming their conduct, and meditating on death and judgment, heaven and hell, they seem to become, in point of intellect, different beings from what they were. Before, they took things as they came, and thought no more of one thing than another. But now every event has a meaning; they have their own estimate of whatever happens to them; they are mindful of times and seasons, and compare the present with the past; and the world, no longer dull, monotonous, unprofitable, and hopeless, is a various and complicated drama, with parts and an object, and an awful moral.

<sup>1</sup>*Paradise Lost*, XII, 646.

<sup>2</sup>Pentheus of Thebes, in the *Bacchæ* of Euripides. Pentheus speaks of seeming to see two suns in l. 918.



Now from these instances, to which many more might be added, it is plain, first, that the communication of knowledge certainly is either a condition or the means of that sense of enlargement or enlightenment, of which at this day we hear so much in certain quarters: this cannot be denied; but next, it is equally plain, that such communication is not the whole of the process. The enlargement consists, not merely in the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas hitherto unknown to it, but in the mind's energetic and simultaneous action upon and towards and among those new ideas, which are rushing in upon it. It is the action of a formative power, reducing to order and meaning the matter of our acquirements; it is a making the objects of our knowledge subjectively our own, or, to use a familiar word, it is a digestion of what we receive, into the substance of our previous state of thought; and without this no enlargement is said to follow. There is no enlargement, unless there be a comparison of ideas one with another, as they come before the mind, and a systematizing of them. We feel our minds to be growing and expanding *then*, when we not only learn, but refer what we learn to what we know already. It is not a mere addition to our knowledge which is the illumination; but the locomotion, the movement onwards, of that mental center, to which both what we know and what we are learning, the accumulating mass of our acquirements, gravitates. And therefore a truly great intellect, and recognized to be such by the common opinion of mankind, such as the intellect of Aristotle, or of St. Thomas,<sup>1</sup> or of Newton, or of Goethe (I purposely take instances within and without the Catholic pale, when I would speak of the intellect as such), is one which takes a connected view of old and new, past and present, far and near, and which has an insight into the influence of all these one on another; without which there is no whole, and no center. It possesses the knowledge, not only of things, but also of their mutual and true relations; knowledge, not merely considered as acquirement, but as philosophy.

Accordingly, when this analytical, distributive, harmonizing process is away, the mind experiences no enlargement, and is not

reckoned as enlightened or comprehensive, whatever it may add to its knowledge. For instance, a great memory, as I have already said, does not make a philosopher, any more than a dictionary can be called a grammar. There are men who embrace in their minds a vast multitude of ideas, but with little sensibility about their real relations towards each other. These may be antiquarians, annalists, naturalists; they may be learned in the law; they may be versed in statistics; they are most useful in their own place; I should shrink from speaking disrespectfully of them; still, there is nothing in such attainments to guarantee the absence of narrowness of mind. If they are nothing more than well-read men, or men of information, they have not what specially deserves the name of culture of mind, or fulfills the type of liberal education.

In like manner we sometimes fall in with persons who have seen much of the world, and of the men who, in their day, have played a conspicuous part in it, but who generalize nothing, and have no observation, in the true sense of the word. They abound in information in detail, curious and entertaining, about men and things; and, having lived under the influence of no very clear or settled principles, religious or political, they speak of every one and everything, only as so many phenomena, which are complete in themselves, and lead to nothing, not discussing them, or teaching any truth, or instructing the hearer, but simply talking. No one would say that these persons, well informed as they are, had attained to any great culture of intellect or to philosophy.

The case is the same still more strikingly where the persons in question are beyond dispute men of inferior powers and deficient education. Perhaps they have been much in foreign countries, and they receive, in a passive, otiose, unfruitful way, the various facts which are forced upon them there. Seafaring men, for example, range from one end of the earth to the other; but the multiplicity of external objects which they have encountered forms no symmetrical and consistent picture upon their imagination; they see the tapestry of human life as it were on the wrong side, and it tells no story. They sleep, and they rise up, and they find themselves now in Europe, now in Asia; they see visions of great

<sup>1</sup>Aquinas.



cities and wild regions; they are in the marts of commerce or amid the islands of the South; they gaze on Pompey's Pillar<sup>1</sup> or on the Andes; and nothing which meets them carries them forward or backward to any idea beyond itself. Nothing has a drift or relation; nothing has a history or a promise. Everything stands by itself, and comes and goes in its turn, like the shifting scenes of a show, which leave the spectator where he was. Perhaps you are near such a man on a particular occasion, and expect him to be shocked or perplexed at something which occurs; but one thing is much the same to him as another, or, if he is perplexed, it is as not knowing what to say, whether it is right to admire, or to ridicule, or to disapprove, while conscious that some expression of opinion is expected from him; for in fact he has no standard of judgment at all, and no landmarks to guide him to a conclusion. Such is mere acquisition, and, I repeat, no one would dream of calling it philosophy.

Instances such as these confirm, by the contrast, the conclusion I have already drawn from those which preceded them. That only is true enlargement of mind which is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values, and determining their mutual dependence. Thus is that form of universal knowledge, of which I have on a former occasion spoken, set up in the individual intellect, and constitutes its perfection. Possessed of this real illumination, the mind never views any part of the extended subject-matter of knowledge without recollecting that it is but a part, or without the associations which spring from this recollection. It makes everything in some sort lead to everything else; it would communicate the image of the whole to every separate portion, till that whole becomes in imagination like a spirit, everywhere pervading and penetrating its component parts, and giving them one definite meaning. Just as our bodily organs, when mentioned, recall their function in the body, as the word "creation" suggests the Creator, and "subjects" a sovereign, so, in the mind of the philosopher, as we are abstractedly conceiving of him, the

elements of the physical and moral world, sciences, arts, pursuits, ranks, offices, events, opinions, individualities, are all viewed as one, with correlative functions, and as gradually by successive combinations converging, one and all, to the true center.

To have even a portion of this illuminative reason and true philosophy is the highest state to which nature can aspire, in the way of intellect; it puts the mind above the influences of chance and necessity, above anxiety, suspense, tumult, and superstition, which are the portion of the many. Men, whose minds are possessed with some one object, take exaggerated views of its importance, are feverish in the pursuit of it, make it the measure of things which are utterly foreign to it, and are startled and despond if it happens to fail them. They are ever in alarm or in transport. Those on the other hand who have no object or principle whatever to hold by, lose their way, every step they take. They are thrown out, and do not know what to think or say, at every fresh juncture; they have no view of persons, or occurrences, or facts, which come suddenly upon them, and they hang upon the opinion of others, for want of internal resources. But the intellect, which has been disciplined to the perfection of its powers, which knows, and thinks while it knows, which has learned to leaven the dense mass of facts and events with the elastic force of reason, such an intellect cannot be partial, cannot be exclusive, cannot be impetuous, cannot be at a loss, cannot but be patient, collected, and majestically calm, because it discerns the end in every beginning, the origin in every end, the law in every interruption, the limit in each delay; because it ever knows where it stands, and how its path lies from one point to another. It is the *τετραγώνος* of the Peripatetic,<sup>2</sup> and has the *nil admirari*<sup>3</sup> of the Stoic—

*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,  
Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum  
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The four-square man of Aristotle (see *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, x, 11), who was called the Peripatetic because, according to tradition, he walked about in the Lyceum while lecturing to his pupils.

<sup>3</sup>To wonder at nothing (Horace, *Epistles*, I, vi, 1).

<sup>4</sup>Happy is he who is able to know the sequences of things, and thus triumphs over all fear, and inexorable fate, and the roar of greedy Acheron (Virgil, *Georgics*, II, 490-492).

<sup>1</sup>Near Alexandria

There are men who, when in difficulties, originate at the moment vast ideas or dazzling projects; who, under the influence of excitement, are able to cast a light, almost as if from inspiration, on a subject or course of action which comes before them; who have a sudden presence of mind equal to any emergency, rising with the occasion, and an undaunted magnanimous bearing, and an energy and keenness which is but made intense by opposition. This is genius, this is heroism; it is the exhibition of a natural gift, which no culture can teach, at which no institution can aim; here, on the contrary, we are concerned, not with mere nature, but with training and teaching. That perfection of the intellect, which is the result of education, and its *beau idéal*, to be imparted to individuals in their respective measures, is the clear, calm, accurate vision and comprehension of all things, as far as the finite mind can embrace them, each in its place, and with its own characteristics upon it. It is almost prophetic from its knowledge of history; it is almost heart-searching from its knowledge of human nature; it has almost supernatural charity from its freedom from littleness and prejudice; it has almost the repose of faith, because nothing can startle it; it has almost the beauty and harmony of heavenly contemplation, so intimate is it with the eternal order of things and the music of the spheres.

And now, if I may take for granted that the true and adequate end of intellectual training and of a university is not learning or acquirement, but rather, is thought or reason exercised upon knowledge, or what may be called philosophy, I shall be in a position to explain the various mistakes which at the present day beset the subject of university education.

I say then, if we would improve the intellect, first of all, we must ascend: we cannot gain real knowledge on a level; we must generalize, we must reduce to method, we must have a grasp of principles, and group and shape our acquisitions by them. It matters not whether our field of operation be wide or limited; in every case, to command it, is to mount above it. Who has not felt the irritation of mind and impatience created by a deep, rich country, visited for the first time, with winding lanes, and high hedges, and green steeps, and tangled woods, and every-

thing smiling indeed, but in a maze? The same feeling comes upon us in a strange city, when we have no map of its streets. Hence you hear of practiced travelers, when they first come into a place, mounting some high hill or church tower, by way of reconnoitering its neighborhood. In like manner you must be above your knowledge, gentlemen, not under it, or it will oppress you; and the more you have of it the greater will be the load. The learning of a Salmasius<sup>1</sup> or a Burman,<sup>2</sup> unless you are its master, will be your tyrant. *Imperat aut servit*,<sup>3</sup> if you can wield it with a strong arm, it is a great weapon; otherwise,

*Vis consili expers  
Mole ruît suâ.*<sup>4</sup>

You will be overwhelmed, like Tarpeia,<sup>5</sup> by the heavy wealth which you have exacted from tributary generations.

Instances abound; there are authors who are as pointless as they are inexhaustible in their literary resources. They measure knowledge by bulk, as it lies in the rude block, without symmetry, without design. How many commentators are there on the Classics, how many on Holy Scripture, from whom we rise up, wondering at the learning which has passed before us, and wondering why it passed! How many writers are there of ecclesiastical history, such as Mosheim or Du Pin,<sup>6</sup> who, breaking up their subject into details, destroy its life, and defraud us of the whole by their anxiety about the parts! The sermons, again, of the English divines in the seventeenth century, how often are they mere repertoires of miscellaneous and officious learning! Of course Catholics also may read without thinking; and in their case, equally as with Protestants, it holds good, that that knowledge of theirs is unworthy of the name, knowledge which they have not thought through, and thought out. Such readers are only possessed by their knowledge,

<sup>1</sup>Dutch classical scholar (1538-1653), professor at Leyden.

<sup>2</sup>Also a Dutch scholar (1668-1741), professor at Utrecht and Leyden.

<sup>3</sup>It either commands or serves (said of money, Horace, *Epistles*, I, x, 48).

<sup>4</sup>Force without discretion falls of its own weight (Horace, *Odes*, III, iv, 65).

<sup>5</sup>She betrayed the Roman citadel on the Capitoline Hill to the Sabines, in return for what they wore on their arms. What she wanted was their bracelets, but instead they cast their shields on her and crushed her to death.

<sup>6</sup>The former a German protestant (1694-1755), the latter a Frenchman (1783-1865).



not possessed of it; nay, in matter of fact they are often even carried away by it, without any volition of their own. Recollect, the memory can tyrannize as well as the imagination. Derangement, I believe, has been considered as a loss of control over the sequence of ideas. The mind, once set in motion, is henceforth deprived of the power of initiation, and becomes the victim of a train of associations, one thought suggesting another, in the way of cause and effect, as if by a mechanical process, or some physical necessity. No one, who has had experience of men of studious habits, but must recognize the existence of a parallel phenomenon in the case of those who have over-stimulated the memory. In such persons reason acts almost as feebly and as impotently as in the madman; once fairly started on any subject whatever, they have no power of self-control; they passively endure the succession of impulses which are evolved out of the original exciting cause; they are passed on from one idea to another and go steadily forward, plodding along one line of thought in spite of the amplest concessions of the hearer, or wandering from it in endless digression in spite of his remonstrances. Now, if, as is very certain, no one would envy the madman the glow and originality of his conceptions, why must we extol the cultivation of that intellect, which is the prey, not indeed of barren fancies but of barren facts, of random intrusions from without, though not of morbid imaginations from within? And in thus speaking, I am not denying that a strong and ready memory is in itself a real treasure; I am not disparaging a well-stored mind, though it be nothing besides, provided it be sober, any more than I would despise a bookseller's shop: it is of great value to others, even when not so to the owner. Nor am I banishing, far from it, the possessors of deep and multifarious learning from my ideal university; they adorn it in the eyes of men; I do but say that they constitute no type of the results at which it aims; that it is no great gain to the intellect to have enlarged the memory at the expense of faculties which are indisputably higher.

Nor indeed am I supposing that there is any great danger, at least in this day, of over-education; the danger is on the other side. I will tell you, gentlemen, what has been the practical error of the last twenty years—not

to load the memory of the student with a mass of undigested knowledge, but to attempt so much that nothing has been really effected, to teach so many things, that nothing has properly been learned at all. It has been the error of distracting and enfeebling the mind by an unmeaning profusion of subjects; of implying that a smattering in a dozen branches of study was not shallowness, which it really is, but enlargement; of considering an acquaintance with the learned names of things and persons, and the possession of clever duodecimos, and attendance on eloquent lecturers, and membership with scientific institutions, and the sight of the experiments of a platform and the specimens of a museum, that all this was not dissipation of mind, but progress. All things now are to be learned at once, not first one thing, then another, not one well but many badly. Learning is to be without exertion, without attention, without toil; without grounding, without advance, without finishing. There is to be nothing individual in it; and this, forsooth, is the wonder of the age. What the steam-engine does with matter, the printing-press is to do with mind; it is to act mechanically, and the population is to be passively, almost unconsciously enlightened, by the mere multiplication and dissemination of volumes. Whether it be the schoolboy, or the school-girl, or the youth at college, or the mechanic in the town, or the politician in the senate, all have been the victims in one way or other of this most preposterous and pernicious of delusions. Wise men have lifted up their voices in vain; and at length, lest their own institutions should be outshone and should disappear in the folly of the hour, they have been obliged, as far as was conscientiously possible, to humor a spirit which they could not withstand, and make temporizing concessions at which they could not but inwardly smile.

Now I must guard, gentlemen, against any possible misconception of my meaning. Let me frankly declare then, that I have no fear at all of the education of the people: the more education they have the better, so that it is really education. Next, as to the cheap publication of scientific and literary works, which is now in vogue, I consider it a great advantage, convenience, and gain; that is, to those to whom education has given a capacity



for using them. Further, I consider such innocent recreations as science and literature are able to furnish will be a very fit occupation of the thoughts and the leisure of young persons, and may be made the means of keeping them from bad employments and bad companions. Moreover, as to that superficial acquaintance with chemistry, and geology, and astronomy, and political economy, and modern history, and biography, and other branches of knowledge, which periodical literature and occasional lectures and scientific institutions diffuse through the community, I think it a graceful accomplishment, and a suitable, nay, in this day a necessary accomplishment, in the case of educated men. Nor, lastly, am I disparaging or discouraging the thorough acquisition of any one of these studies, or denying that, as far as it goes, such thorough acquisition is a real education of the mind. All I say is, call things by their right names, and do not confuse together ideas which are essentially different. A thorough knowledge of one science and a superficial acquaintance with many, are not the same thing; a smattering of a hundred things or a memory for detail, is not a philosophical or comprehensive view. Recreations are not education; accomplishments are not education. Do not say, the people must be educated, when, after all, you only mean amused, refreshed, soothed, put into good spirits and good humor, or kept from vicious excesses. I do not say that such amusements, such occupations of mind, are not a great gain; but they are not education. You may as well call drawing and fencing education, as a general knowledge of botany or conchology. Stuffing birds or playing stringed instruments is an elegant pastime, and a resource to the idle, but it is not education; it does not form or cultivate the intellect. Education is a high word; it is the preparation for knowledge, and it is the imparting of knowledge in proportion to that preparation. We require intellectual eyes to know withal, as bodily eyes for sight. We need both objects and organs intellectual; we cannot gain them without setting about it; we cannot gain them in our sleep or by haphazard. The best telescope does not dispense with eyes; the printing-press or the lecture room will assist us greatly, but we must be true to ourselves, we must be parties in the work. A university

is, according to the usual designation, an *alma mater*, knowing her children one by one, not a foundry, or a mint, or a treadmill.

I protest to you, gentlemen, that if I had to choose between a so-called university which dispensed with residence and tutorial superintendence, and gave its degrees to any person who passed an examination in a wide range of subjects, and a university which had no professors or examinations at all, but merely brought a number of young men together for three or four years, and then sent them away as the University of Oxford is said to have done some sixty years since, if I were asked which of these two methods was the better discipline of the intellect—mind, I do not say which is *morally* the better, for it is plain that compulsory study must be a good and idleness an intolerable mischief—but if I must determine which of the two courses was the more successful in training, molding, enlarging the mind, which sent out men the more fitted for their secular duties, which produced better public men, men of the world, men whose names would descend to posterity, I have no hesitation in giving the preference to that university which did nothing, over that which exacted of its members an acquaintance with every science under the sun. And, paradox as this may seem, still if results be the test of systems, the influence of the public schools and colleges of England, in the course of the last century, at least will bear out one side of the contrast as I have drawn it. What would come, on the other hand, of the ideal systems of education which have fascinated the imagination of this age, could they ever take effect, and whether they would not produce a generation frivolous, narrow-minded, and resourceless, intellectually considered, is a fair subject for debate, but so far is certain, that the universities and scholastic establishments to which I refer, and which did little more than bring together first boys and then youths in large numbers, these institutions, with miserable deformities on the side of morals, with a hollow profession of Christianity, and a heathen code of ethics—I say, at least they can boast of a succession of heroes and statesmen, of literary men and philosophers, of men conspicuous for great natural virtues, for habits of business, for knowledge of life, for practical judgment, for cultivated tastes, for accomplishments,

who have made England what it is—able to subdue the earth, able to domineer over Catholics.

How is this to be explained? I suppose as follows: When a multitude of young persons, 5 keen, open-hearted, sympathetic, and observant, as young persons are, come together and freely mix with each other, they are sure to learn one from another, even if there be no one to teach them; the conversation of all 10 is a series of lectures to each, and they gain for themselves new ideas and views, fresh matter of thought, and distinct principles for judging and acting, day by day. An infant has to learn the meaning of the information which 15 its senses convey to it, and this seems to be its employment. It fancies all that the eye presents to it to be close to it, till it actually learns the contrary, and thus by practice does it ascertain the relations and uses of those 20 first elements of knowledge which are necessary for its animal existence. A parallel teaching is necessary for our social being, and it is secured by a large school or a college, and this effect may be fairly called in its own 25 department an enlargement of mind. It is seeing the world on a small field with little trouble; for the pupils or students come from very different places, and with widely different notions, and there is much to generalize, much 30 to adjust, much to eliminate, there are interrelations to be defined, and conventional rules to be established, in the process, by which the whole assemblage is molded together, and gains one tone and one character. Let it be 35 clearly understood, I repeat it, that I am not taking into account moral or religious considerations; I am but saying that that youthful community will constitute a whole, it will embody a specific idea, it will represent a 40 doctrine, it will administer a code of conduct, and it will furnish principles of thought and action. It will give birth to a living teaching, which in course of time will take the shape of a self-perpetuating tradition, or a *genius loci*,<sup>1</sup> 45 as it is sometimes called, which haunts the home where it has been born, and which imbues and forms, more or less, and one by one, every individual who is successively brought under its shadow. Thus it is that, inde- 50 pendent of direct instruction on the part of superiors, there is a sort of self-education

in the academic institutions of protestant England; a characteristic tone of thought, a recognized standard of judgment is found in them, which, as developed in the individual who is submitted to it, becomes a twofold source of strength to him, both from the distinct stamp it impresses on his mind, and from the bond of union which it creates between him and others—effects which are 10 shared by the authorities of the place, for they themselves have been educated in it, and at all times are exposed to the influence of its moral atmosphere. Here then is a real teaching, whatever be its standards and principles, true or false; and it at least tends towards 15 cultivation of the intellect; it at least recognizes that knowledge is something more than a sort of passive reception of scraps and details; it is a something, and it does a something, which never will issue from the most strenuous efforts of a set of teachers, with no mutual sympathies and no intercommunion, of a set of examiners with no opinions which 20 they dare profess, and with no common principles, who are teaching or questioning a set of youths who do not know them, and do not know each other, on a large number of subjects, different in kind, and connected by no wide philosophy, three times a week, or 25 three times a year, or once in three years, in chill lecture-rooms or on a pompous anniversary.

Nay, self-education in any shape, in the most restricted sense, is preferable to a 30 system of teaching which, professing so much, really does so little for the mind. Shut your college gates against the votary of knowledge, throw him back upon the searchings and the efforts of his own mind; he will gain by being 35 spared an entrance into your Babel. Few indeed there are who can dispense with the stimulus and support of instructors, or will do anything at all, if left to themselves. And fewer still (though such great minds are to 40 be found) who will not, from such unassisted attempts, contract a self-reliance and a self-esteem, which are not only moral evils, but serious hindrances to the attainment of truth. And next to none, perhaps, or none, who will 45 not be reminded from time to time of the disadvantage under which they lie, by their imperfect grounding, by the breaks, deficiencies, and irregularities of their knowledge, by the 50 eccentricity of opinion and the confusion of

<sup>1</sup>Spirit of the place.



principle which they exhibit. They will be too often ignorant of what every one knows and takes for granted, of that multitude of small truths which fall upon the mind like dust, impalpable and ever accumulating; they may be unable to converse, they may argue perversely, they may pride themselves on their worst paradoxes or their grossest truisms, they may be full of their own mode of viewing things, unwilling to be put out of their way, slow to enter into the minds of others;—but, with these and whatever other liabilities upon their heads, they are likely to have more thought, more mind, more philosophy, more true enlargement, than those earnest but ill-used persons who are forced to load their minds with a score of subjects against an examination, who have too much on their hands to indulge themselves in thinking or investigation, who devour premise and conclusion together with indiscriminate greediness, who hold whole sciences on faith, and commit demonstrations to memory, and who too often, as might be expected, when their period of education is passed, throw up all they have learned in disgust, having gained nothing really by their anxious labors, except perhaps the habit of application.

Yet such is the better specimen of the fruit of that ambitious system which has of late years been making way among us: for its result on ordinary minds, and on the common run of students, is less satisfactory still; they leave their place of education simply dissipated and relaxed by the multiplicity of subjects, which they have never really mastered, and so shallow as not even to know their shallowness. How much better, I say, is it for the active and thoughtful intellect, where such is to be found, to eschew the college and the university altogether, than to submit to a drudgery so ignoble, a mockery so contemptible! How much more profitable for the independent mind, after the mere rudiments of education, to range through a library at random, taking down books as they meet him, and pursuing the trains of thought which his mother wit suggests! How much healthier to wander into the fields, and there with the exiled prince to find “tongues in the trees, books in the running brooks!”<sup>1</sup> How much more genuine an education is that of the

poor boy in the poem<sup>2</sup>—a poem, whether in conception or in execution, one of the most touching in our language—who, not in the wide world, but ranging day by day around his widowed mother’s home, “a dexterous gleaner” in a narrow field, and with only such slender outfit

“as the village school and books a few  
Supplied,”

contrived from the beach, and the quay, and the fisher’s boat, and the inn’s fireside, and the tradesman’s shop, and the shepherd’s walk, and the smuggler’s hut, and the mossy moor, and the screaming gulls, and the restless waves, to fashion for himself a philosophy and a poetry of his own!

But in a large subject I am exceeding my necessary limits. Gentlemen, I must conclude abruptly; and postpone any summing up of my argument, should that be necessary, to another day.

## DISCOURSE VII

### LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE VIEWED IN RELATION TO PROFESSIONAL

I HAVE been insisting, in my two preceding Discourses, first, on the cultivation of the intellect, as an end which may reasonably be pursued for its own sake; and next, on the nature of that cultivation, or what that cultivation consists in. Truth of whatever kind is the proper object of the intellect; its cultivation then lies in fitting it to apprehend and contemplate truth. Now the intellect in its present state, with exceptions which need not here be specified, does not discern truth intuitively, or as a whole. We know, not by a direct and simple vision, not at a glance, but, as it were, by piecemeal and accumulation, by a mental process, by going round an object, by the comparison, the combination, the mutual correction, the continual adaptation, of many partial notions, by the joint application and concentration upon it of many faculties and exercises of mind. Such a union and concert of the in-

<sup>1</sup>Crabbe’s *Tales of the Hall* [Bk. IV]. This Poem, let me say, I read on its first publication, above thirty years ago, with extreme delight, and have never lost my love of it; and on taking it up lately found I was even more touched by it than heretofore. A work which can please in youth and age seems to fulfill (in logical language) the *accidental definition* of a Classic (Newman’s note).

<sup>2</sup>See *As You Like It*, II, i, 16.



tellectual powers, such an enlargement and development, such a comprehensiveness, is necessarily a matter of training. And again, such a training is a matter of rule; it is not mere application, however exemplary, which introduces the mind to truth, nor the reading many books, nor the getting up many subjects, nor the witnessing many experiments, nor the attending many lectures. All this is short of enough; a man may have done it all, yet be lingering in the vestibule of knowledge: he may not realize what his mouth utters; he may not see with his mental eye what confronts him; he may have no grasp of things as they are; or at least he may have no power at all of advancing one step forward of himself, in consequence of what he has already acquired, no power of discriminating between truth and falsehood, of sifting out the grains of truth from the mass, of arranging things according to their real value, and, if I may use the phrase, of building up ideas. Such a power is the result of a scientific formation of mind; it is an acquired faculty of judgment, of clear-sightedness, of sagacity, of wisdom, of philosophical reach of mind, and of intellectual self-possession and repose—qualities which do not come of mere acquirement. The bodily eye, the organ for apprehending material objects, is provided by nature; the eye of the mind, of which the object is truth, is the work of discipline and habit.

This process of training, by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture, is called liberal education; and though there is no one in whom it is carried as far as is conceivable, or whose intellect would be a pattern of what intellects should be made, yet there is scarcely any one but may gain an idea of what real training is, and at least look towards it, and make its true scope and result, not something else, his standard of excellence; and numbers there are who may submit themselves to it, and secure it to themselves in good measure. And to set forth the right standard, and to train according to it, and to help forward all students towards it according to their various capacities, this I conceive to be the business of a university.

Now this is what some great men are very slow to allow; they insist that education should be confined to some particular and narrow end, and should issue in some definite work, which can be weighed and measured. They argue as if everything, as well as every person, had its price; and that where there has been a great outlay, they have a right to expect a return in kind. This they call making education and instruction "useful," and "utility" becomes their watchword. With a fundamental principle of this nature, they very naturally go on to ask, what there is to show for the expense of a university; what is the real worth in the market of the article called "a liberal education," on the supposition that it does not teach us definitely how to advance our manufactures, or to improve our lands, or to better our civil economy; or again, if it does not at once make this man a lawyer, that an engineer, and that a surgeon; or at least if it does not lead to discoveries in chemistry, astronomy, geology, magnetism, and science of every kind.

This question, as might have been expected, has been keenly debated in the present age, and formed one main subject of the controversy, to which I referred in the Introduction to the present Discourses, as having been sustained in the first decade of this century by a celebrated *Northern Review*<sup>1</sup> on the one hand, and defenders of the University of Oxford on the other. Hardly had the authorities of that ancient seat of learning, waking from their long neglect, set on foot a plan for the education of the youth committed to them, than the representatives of science and literature in the city, which has sometimes been called the *Northern Athens*,<sup>2</sup> remonstrated with their gravest arguments and their most brilliant satire, against the direction and shape which the reform was taking. Nothing would content them, but that the University should be set to rights on the basis of the philosophy of utility; a philosophy, as they seem to have thought, which needed but to be proclaimed in order to be embraced. In truth, they were little aware of the depth and force of the principles on which the authorities academical were proceeding, and, this being so, it was not to be expected that they would be allowed to walk at leisure over

<sup>1</sup>The *Edinburgh Review*.<sup>2</sup>Edinburgh.

the field of controversy which they had selected. Accordingly they were encountered in behalf of the university by two men of great name and influence in their day, of very different minds, but united, as by collegiate ties, so in the clear-sighted and large view which they took of the whole subject of liberal education; and the defense thus provided for the Oxford studies has kept its ground to this day.

Let me be allowed to devote a few words to the memory of distinguished persons, under the shadow of whose name I once lived, and by whose doctrine I am now profiting. In the heart of Oxford there is a small plot of ground, hemmed in by public thoroughfares, which has been the possession and the home of one society for above five hundred years. In the old time of Boniface the Eighth and John the Twenty-second, in the age of Scotus and Occam and Dante,<sup>1</sup> before Wiclif or Huss had kindled those miserable fires which are still raging to the ruin of the highest interests of man, an unfortunate king of England, Edward the Second,<sup>2</sup> flying from the field of Bannockburn, is said to have made a vow to the Blessed Virgin to found a religious house in her honor, if he got back in safety. Prompted and aided by his almoner, he decided on placing this house in the city of Alfred; and the Image of our Lady, which is opposite its entrance-gate, is the token of the vow and its fulfillment to this day. King and almoner have long been in the dust, and strangers have entered into their inheritance, and their creed has been forgotten, and their holy rites disowned; but day by day a memento is still made in the holy Sacrifice by at least one Catholic priest, once a member of that college, for the souls of those Catholic benefactors who fed him there for so many years.<sup>3</sup> The visitor, whose curiosity has been excited by its present fame, gazes perhaps with something of disappointment on a collection of buildings which have with them so few of the circumstances of dignity or wealth. Broad quadrangles, high halls and chambers, ornamented

cloisters, stately walks, or umbrageous gardens, a throng of students, ample revenues, or a glorious history, none of these things were the portion of that old Catholic foundation; nothing in short which to the common eye sixty years ago would have given tokens of what it was to be. But it had at that time a spirit working within it, which enabled its inmates to do, amid its seeming insignificance, what no other body in the place could equal; not a very abstruse gift or extraordinary boast, but a rare one, the honest purpose to administer the trust committed to them in such a way as their conscience pointed out as best. So, whereas the Colleges of Oxford are self-electing bodies, the fellows in each perpetually filling up for themselves the vacancies which occur in their number, the members of this foundation determined, at a time when, either from evil custom or from ancient statute, such a thing was not known elsewhere, to throw open their fellowships to the competition of all comers, and, in the choice of associates henceforth, to cast to the winds every personal motive and feeling, family connection, and friendship, and patronage, and political interest, and local claim, and prejudice, and party jealousy, and to elect solely on public and patriotic grounds. Nay, with a remarkable independence of mind, they resolved that even the table of honors, awarded to literary merit by the University in its new system of examination for degrees, should not fetter their judgment as electors; but that at all risks, and whatever criticism it might cause, and whatever odium they might incur, they would select the men, whoever they were, to be children of their founder, whom they thought in their consciences to be most likely from their intellectual and moral qualities to please him, if (as they expressed it) he were still upon earth, most likely to do honor to his College, most likely to promote the objects which they believed he had at heart. Such persons did not promise to be the disciples of a low utilitarianism; and consequently, as their collegiate reform synchronized with that reform of the academical body, in which they bore a principal part, it was not unnatural that, when the storm broke upon the University from the North, their *alma mater*, whom they loved, should have found her first defenders within the walls of that small College, which

<sup>1</sup>*I.e.*, towards the close of the Middle Age, in the opening years of the fourteenth century. Boniface and John were popes, Scotus and Occam scholastic philosophers. Wiclif and Huss contributed to bring about the Protestant Reformation.

<sup>2</sup>Born in 1284, reigned from 1307, murdered in 1327. The Battle of Bannockburn was fought in 1314. Edward founded Oriel College.

<sup>3</sup>Newman's allusion is, of course, to himself.



had first put itself into a condition to be her champion.

These defenders, gentlemen, I have said, were two, of whom the more distinguished was the late Dr. Copleston, then a Fellow of the College, successively its Provost, and Protestant Bishop of Llandaff. In that society, which owes so much to him, his name lives, and ever will live, for the distinction which his talents bestowed on it, for the academical importance to which he raised it, for the generosity of spirit, the liberality of sentiment, and the kindness of heart, with which he adorned it, and which even those who had least sympathy with some aspects of his mind and character could not but admire and love. Men come to their meridian at various periods of their lives; the last years of the eminent person I am speaking of were given to duties which, I am told, have been the means of endearing him to numbers, but which afforded no scope for that peculiar vigor and keenness of mind which enabled him, when a young man, single-handed, with easy gallantry, to encounter and overthrow the charge of three giants of the North combined against him.<sup>1</sup> I believe I am right in saying that, in the progress of the controversy, the most scientific, the most critical, and the most witty, of that literary company, all of them now, as he himself, removed from this visible scene, Professor Playfair, Lord Jeffrey, and the Rev. Sydney Smith, threw together their several efforts into one article of their review, in order to crush and pound to dust the audacious controvertist who had come out against them in defense of his own institutions. To have even contended with such men was a sufficient voucher for his ability, even before we open his pamphlets, and have actual evidence of the good sense, the spirit, the scholar-like taste, and the purity of style, by which they are distinguished.

He was supported in the controversy, on the same general principles, but with more of method and distinctness, and, I will add, with greater force and beauty and perfection, both of thought and of language, by the other distinguished writer, to whom I have already referred, Mr. Davison; who, though not so well known to the world in his day, has left more behind him than the Provost of Oriel, to

make his name remembered by posterity. This thoughtful man, who was the admired and intimate friend of a very remarkable person, whom, whether he wish it or not, numbers revere and love as the first author of the subsequent movement in the Protestant Church towards Catholicism,<sup>2</sup> this grave and philosophical writer, whose works I can never look into without sighing that such a man was lost to the Catholic Church, as Dr. Butler<sup>3</sup> before him, by some early bias or some fault of self-education—he, in a review of a work by Mr. Edgeworth on Professional Education, which attracted a good deal of attention in its day, goes leisurely over the same ground, which had already been rapidly traversed by Dr. Copleston, and, though professedly employed upon Mr. Edgeworth, is really replying to the northern critic who had brought that writer's work into notice, and to a far greater author than either of them, who in a past age had argued on the same side.<sup>4</sup>

The author to whom I allude is no other than Locke.<sup>5</sup> That celebrated philosopher has preceded the Edinburgh Reviewers in condemning the ordinary subjects in which boys are instructed at school, on the ground that they are not needed by them in after life; and before quoting what his disciples have said in the present century, I will refer to a few passages of the master. "'Tis matter of astonishment," he says in his work on education, "that men of quality and parts should suffer themselves to be so far misled by custom and implicit faith. Reason, if consulted with, would advise, that their children's time should be spent in acquiring what might be useful to them, when they come to be men, rather than

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Keble, Vicar of Hursley, late Fellow of Oriel, and Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford (Newman's note).

<sup>3</sup>Bishop Joseph Butler (1692–1752), author of the *Analogy of Religion*.

<sup>4</sup>Edgeworth's *Essays on Professional Education* were reviewed in the *Edinburgh* in October, 1809 (Vol. XV, p. 40), and the review was made the occasion for an attack on Oxford for its neglect of "useful knowledge." In 1810 Copleston answered the *Edinburgh* in a pamphlet entitled *A Reply to the Calumnies of the Edinburgh Review against Oxford*. Copleston also published a *Second Reply* and a *Third Reply* in this and the following year. Meanwhile in April, 1810, the *Edinburgh* (XVI, 158) published a reply to Copleston, which Newman believed to have been written by Playfair, Jeffrey, and Sydney Smith. Davison's paper on Edgeworth's *Essays* was published in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1811 (VI, 166).

<sup>5</sup>John Locke (1632–1704), author of the *Essay Concerning the Human Understanding*.

<sup>1</sup>Newman alludes to Copleston's activity in church restoration in Wales.



that their heads should be stuffed with a deal of trash, a great part whereof they usually never do ('tis certain they never need to) think on again as long as they live; and so much of it as does stick by them they are only the worse for."

And so again, speaking of verse-making, he says: "I know not what reason a father can have to wish his son a poet, who does not desire him to bid defiance to all other callings and business; which is not yet the worst of the case; for, if he proves a successful rimer, and gets once the reputation of a wit, I desire it to be considered, what company and places he is likely to spend his time in, nay, and estate too; for it is very seldom seen that any one discovers mines of gold or silver in Parnassus. 'Tis a pleasant air but a barren soil."

In another passage he distinctly limits utility in education to its bearing on the future profession or trade of the pupil, that is, he scorns the idea of any education of the intellect, simply as such. "Can there be anything more ridiculous," he asks, "than that a father should waste his own money, and his son's time, in setting him to learn the Roman language, when at the same time he designs him for a trade, wherein he, having no use of Latin, fails not to forget that little which he brought from school, and which 'tis ten to one he abhors for the ill-usage it procured him? Could it be believed, unless we have everywhere amongst us examples of it, that a child should be forced to learn the rudiments of language, which he is never to use in the course of life that he is designed to, and neglect all the while the writing a good hand, and casting accounts, which are of great advantage in all conditions of life, and to most trades indispensably necessary?"<sup>1</sup> Nothing of course can be more absurd than to neglect in education those matters which are necessary for a boy's future calling; but the tone of Locke's remarks evidently implies more than this, and is condemnatory of any teaching which tends to the general cultivation of the mind.

Now to turn to his modern disciples. The study of the classics has been made the basis of the Oxford education, in the reforms which I have spoken of, and the Edinburgh Review-

ers protested, after the manner of Locke, that no good could come of a system which was not based upon the principle of utility.

"Classical literature," they said, "is the great object at Oxford. Many minds, so employed, have produced many works and much fame in that department; but if all liberal arts and sciences, useful to human life, had been taught there, if some had dedicated themselves to chemistry, some to mathematics, some to experimental philosophy, and if every attainment had been honored in the mixed ratio of its difficulty and utility, the system of such a university would have been much more valuable, but the splendor of its name something less."

Utility may be made the end of education, in two respects: either as regards the individual educated, or the community at large. In which light do these writers regard it? In the latter. So far they differ from Locke, for they consider the advancement of science as the supreme and real end of a university. This is brought into view in the sentences which follow.

"When a university has been doing useless things for a long time, it appears at first degrading to them to be useful. A set of lectures on political economy would be discouraged in Oxford, probably despised, probably not permitted. To discuss the inclosure of commons, and to dwell upon imports and exports, to come so near to common life, would seem to be undignified and contemptible. In the same manner, the Parr or the Bentley<sup>2</sup> of the day would be scandalized, in a university, to be put on a level with the discoverer of a neutral salt; and yet, what other measure is there of dignity in intellectual labor but usefulness? And what ought the term university to mean, but a place where every science is taught which is liberal, and at the same time useful to mankind? Nothing would so much tend to bring classical literature within proper bounds as a steady and invariable appeal to utility in our appreciation of all human knowledge. . . . Looking always to real utility as our guide, we should see, with equal pleasure, a studious and inquisitive mind arranging the productions of nature, investigating the qualities of bodies, or mastering the difficulties of the

<sup>1</sup>These quotations are from Locke's tract *Of Education*, Sections 94, 174, and 164.

<sup>2</sup>Classical scholars.

learned languages. We should not care whether he was chemist, naturalist, or scholar, because we know it to be as necessary that matter should be studied and subdued to the use of man, as that taste should be gratified, and imagination inflamed."

Such then is the enunciation, as far as words go, of the theory of utility in education; and both on its own account, and for the sake of the able men who have advocated it, it has a claim on the attention of those whose principles I am here representing. Certainly it is specious to contend that nothing is worth pursuing but what is useful; and that life is not long enough to expend upon interesting, or curious, or brilliant trifles. Nay, in one sense, I will grant it is more than specious, it is true; but, if so, how do I propose directly to meet the objection? Why, gentlemen, I have really met it already, *viz.*, in laying down that intellectual culture is its own end; for what has its end in itself, has its use in itself also. I say, if a liberal education consists in the culture of the intellect, and if that culture be in itself a good, here, without going further, is an answer to Locke's question; for if a healthy body is a good in itself, why is not a healthy intellect? and if a college of physicians is a useful institution, because it contemplates bodily health, why is not an academical body, though it were simply and solely engaged in imparting vigor and beauty and grasp to the intellectual portion of our nature? And the Reviewers I am quoting seem to allow this in their better moments, in a passage which, putting aside the question of its justice in fact, is sound and true in the principles to which it appeals:—

The present state of classical education [they say] cultivates the imagination a great deal too much, and other habits of mind a great deal too little, and trains up many young men in a style of elegant imbecility, utterly unworthy of the talents with which nature has endowed them. . . . The matter of fact is, that a classical scholar of twenty-three or twenty-four is a man principally conversant with works of imagination. His feelings are quick, his fancy lively, and his taste good. Talents for speculation and original inquiry he has none, nor has he formed the invaluable habit of pushing things up to their first principles, or of collecting dry and unamusing facts as the materials for reasoning. All the solid and masculine parts of his understanding are left wholly without cultivation; he hates the pain of thinking, and

suspects every man whose boldness and originality call upon him to defend his opinions and prove his assertions.

Now, I am not at present concerned with the specific question of classical education; else I might reasonably question the justice of calling an intellectual discipline, which embraces the study of Aristotle, Thucydides, and Tacitus, which involves scholarship and antiquities, imaginative; still so far I readily grant, that the cultivation of the "understanding," of a "talent for speculation and original inquiry," and of "the habit of pushing things up to their first principles," is a principal portion of a good or liberal education. If then the Reviewers consider such cultivation the characteristic of a useful education, as they seem to do in the foregoing passage, it follows that what they mean by "useful" is just what I mean by "good" or "liberal": and Locke's question becomes a verbal one. Whether youths are to be taught Latin or verse-making will depend on the fact, whether these studies tend to mental culture; but, however this is determined, so far is clear, that in that mental culture consists what I have called a liberal or non-professional, and what the Reviewers call a useful education.

This is the obvious answer which may be made to those who urge upon us the claims of utility in our plans of education; but I am not going to leave the subject here: I mean to take a wider view of it. Let us take "useful," as Locke takes it, in its proper and popular sense, and then we enter upon a large field of thought, to which I cannot do justice in one Discourse, though to-day's is all the space that I can give to it. I say, let us take "useful" to mean, not what is simply good, but what tends to good, or is the instrument of good; and in this sense also, gentlemen, I will show you how a liberal education is truly and fully a useful, though it be not a professional education. "Good" indeed means one thing, and "useful" means another; but I lay it down as a principle, which will save us a great deal of anxiety, that, though the useful is not always good, the good is always useful. Good is not only good, but reproductive of good; this is one of its attributes; nothing is excellent, beautiful, perfect, desirable for its own sake, but it overflows, and spreads the likeness of itself all around



itself. Good is prolific; it is not only good to the eye, but to the taste; it not only attracts us, but it communicates itself; it excites first our admiration and love, then our desire and our gratitude, and that, in proportion to its intenseness and fullness in particular instances. A great good will impart great good. If then the intellect is so excellent a portion of us, and its cultivation so excellent, it is not only beautiful, perfect, admirable, and noble in itself, but in a true and high sense it must be useful to the possessor and to all around him; not useful in any low, mechanical, mercantile sense, but as diffusing good, or as a blessing, or a gift, or power, or a treasure, first to the owner, then through him to the world. I say then, if a liberal education be good, it must necessarily be useful too.

You will see what I mean by the parallel of bodily health. Health is a good in itself, though nothing came of it, and is especially worth seeking and cherishing; yet, after all, the blessings which attend its presence are so great, while they are so close to it and so redound back upon it and encircle it, that we never think of it except as useful as well as good, and praise and prize it for what it does, as well as for what it is, though at the same time we cannot point out any definite and distinct work or production which it can be said to effect. And so as regards intellectual culture, I am far from denying utility in this large sense as the end of education, when I lay it down, that the culture of the intellect is a good in itself and its own end; I do not exclude from the idea of intellectual culture what it cannot but be, from the very nature of things; I only deny that we must be able to point out, before we have any right to call it useful, some art, or business, or profession, or trade, or work as resulting from it, and as its real and complete end. The parallel is exact:—As the body may be sacrificed to some manual or other toil, whether moderate or oppressive, so may the intellect be devoted to some specific profession; and I do not call *this* the culture of the intellect. Again, as some member or organ of the body may be inordinately used and developed, so may memory, or imagination, or the reasoning faculty; and *this* again is not intellectual culture. On the other hand, as the body may be tended, cherished, and exercised with a simple view to its general health, so may the intellect

also be generally exercised in order to its perfect state; and this *is* its cultivation.

Again, as health ought to precede labor of the body, and as a man in health can do what an unhealthy man cannot do, and as of this health the properties are strength, energy, agility, graceful carriage and action, manual dexterity, and endurance of fatigue, so in like manner general culture of mind is the best aid to professional and scientific study, and educated men can do what illiterate cannot; and the man who has learned to think and to reason and to compare and to discriminate and to analyze, who has refined his taste, and formed his judgment, and sharpened his mental vision, will not indeed at once be a lawyer, or a pleader, or an orator, or a statesman, or a physician, or a good landlord, or a man of business, or a soldier, or an engineer, or a chemist, or a geologist, or an antiquarian, but he will be placed in that state of intellect in which he can take up any one of the sciences or callings I have referred to, or any other for which he has a taste or special talent, with an ease, a grace, a versatility, and a success, to which another is a stranger. In this sense then, and as yet I have said but a very few words on a large subject, mental culture is emphatically useful.

If then I am arguing, and shall argue, against professional or scientific knowledge as the sufficient end of a university education, let me not be supposed, gentlemen, to be disrespectful towards particular studies, or arts, or vocations, and those who are engaged in them. In saying that law or medicine is not the end of a university course, I do not mean to imply that the university does not teach law or medicine. What indeed can it teach at all, if it does not teach something particular? It teaches *all* knowledge by teaching all branches of knowledge, and in no other way. I do but say that there will be this distinction as regards a professor of law, or of medicine, or of geology, or of political economy, in a university and out of it, that out of a university he is in danger of being absorbed and narrowed by his pursuit and of giving lectures which are the lectures of nothing more than a lawyer, physician, geologist, or political economist; whereas in a university he will just know where he and his science stand, he has come to it, as it were, from a height, he has taken a survey of all knowledge, he is



kept from extravagance by the very rivalry of other studies, he has gained from them a special illumination and largeness of mind and freedom and self-possession, and he treats his own in consequence with a philosophy and a resource, which belongs not to the study itself, but to his liberal education.

This then is how I should solve the fallacy, for so I must call it, by which Locke and his disciples would frighten us from cultivating the intellect, under the notion that no education is useful which does not teach us some temporal calling, or some mechanical art, or some physical secret. I say that a cultivated intellect, because it is a good in itself, brings with it a power and a grace to every work and occupation which it undertakes, and enables us to be more useful, and to a greater number. There is a duty we owe to human society as such, to the state to which we belong, to the sphere in which we move, to the individuals towards whom we are variously related, and whom we successively encounter in life; and that philosophical or liberal education, as I have called it, which is the proper function of a university, if it refuses the foremost place to professional interests, does but postpone them to the formation of the citizen, and while it subserves the larger interests of philanthropy, prepares also for the successful prosecution of those merely personal objects which at first sight it seems to disparage.

And now, gentlemen, I wish to be allowed to enforce in detail what I have been saying by some extracts from the writings to which I have already alluded, and to which I am so greatly indebted:

It is an undisputed maxim in political economy [says Dr. Copleston] that the separation of professions and the division of labor tend to the perfection of every art, to the wealth of nations, to the general comfort and well-being of the community. This principle of division is in some instances pursued so far as to excite the wonder of people to whose notice it is for the first time pointed out. There is no saying to what extent it may not be carried; and the more the powers of each individual are concentrated in one employment, the greater skill and quickness will he naturally display in performing it. But, while he thus contributes more effectually to the accumulation of national wealth, he becomes himself more and more degraded as a rational being. In proportion as his sphere of action is narrowed his

mental powers and habits become contracted; and he resembles a subordinate part of some powerful machinery, useful in its place, but insignificant and worthless out of it. If it be necessary, as it is beyond all question necessary, that society should be split into divisions and subdivisions, in order that its several duties may be well performed, yet we must be careful not to yield up ourselves wholly and exclusively to the guidance of this system; we must observe what its evils are, and we should modify and restrain it, by bringing into action other principles, which may serve as a check and counterpoise to the main force.

There can be no doubt that every art is improved by confining the professor of it to that single study. But, although the art itself is advanced by this concentration of mind in its service, the individual who is confined to it goes back. The advantage of the community is nearly in an inverse ratio with his own.

Society itself requires some other contribution from each individual, besides the particular duties of his profession. And, if no such liberal intercourse be established, it is the common failing of human nature, to be engrossed with petty views and interests, to underrate the importance of all in which we are not concerned, and to carry our partial notions into cases where they are inapplicable, to act, in short, as so many unconnected units, displacing and repelling one another.

In the cultivation of literature is found that common link, which, among the higher and middle departments of life, unites the jarring sects and subdivisions into one interest, which supplies common topics, and kindles common feelings, unmingled with those narrow prejudices with which all professions are more or less infected. The knowledge, too, which is thus acquired, expands and enlarges the mind, excites its faculties, and calls those limbs and muscles into freer exercise which, by too constant use in one direction, not only acquire an illiberal air, but are apt also to lose somewhat of their native play and energy. And thus, without directly qualifying a man for any of the employments of life, it enriches and ennobles all. Without teaching him the peculiar business of any one office or calling, it enables him to act his part in each of them with better grace and more elevated carriage; and, if happily planned and conducted, is a main ingredient in that complete and generous education which fits a man "to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war."<sup>1</sup>

The view of liberal education, advocated in these extracts, is expanded by Mr. Davison

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.* Milton on Education (Newman's note).

in the essay to which I have already referred. He lays more stress on the "usefulness" of liberal education in the larger sense of the word than his predecessor in the controversy. Instead of arguing that the utility of knowledge to the individual varies inversely with its utility to the public, he chiefly employs himself on the suggestions contained in Dr. Copleston's last sentences. He shows, first, that a liberal education is something far higher, even in the scale of utility, than what is commonly called a useful education, and next, that it is necessary or useful for the purposes even of that professional education which commonly engrosses the title of useful. The former of these two theses he recommends to us in an argument from which the following passages are selected:

It is to take a very contracted view of life [he says] to think with great anxiety how persons may be educated to superior skill in their department, comparatively neglecting or excluding the more liberal and enlarged cultivation. In his (Mr. Edgeworth's) system, the value of every attainment is to be measured by its subserviency to a calling. The specific duties of that calling are exalted at the cost of those free and independent tastes and virtues which come in to sustain the common relations of society, and raise the individual in them. In short, a man is to be usurped by his profession. He is to be clothed in its garb from head to foot. His virtues, his science, and his ideas are all to be put into a gown or uniform, and the whole man to be shaped, pressed, and stiffened, in the exact mold of his technical character. Any interloping accomplishments or a faculty which cannot be taken into public pay, if they are to be indulged in him at all, must creep along under the cloak of his more serviceable privileged merits. Such is the state of perfection to which the spirit and general tendency of this system would lead us.

But the professional character is not the only one which a person engaged in a profession has to support. He is not always upon duty. There are services he owes, which are neither parochial, nor forensic, nor military, nor to be described by any such epithet of civil regulation, and yet are in nowise inferior to those that bear these authoritative titles; inferior neither in their intrinsic value, nor their moral import, nor their impression upon society. As a friend, as a companion, as a citizen at large; in the connections of domestic life; in the improvement and embellishment of his leisure, he has a sphere of action, revolving, if you please, within the sphere of his profession, but not clashing with it; in which if he can show none of the ad-

vantages of an improved understanding, whatever may be his skill or proficiency in the other, he is no more than an ill-educated man.

There is a certain faculty in which all nations of any refinement are great practitioners. It is not taught at school or college as a distinct science; though it deserves that what is taught there should be made to have some reference to it; nor is it endowed at all by the public; everybody being obliged to exercise it for himself in person, which he does to the best of his skill. But in nothing is there a greater difference than in the manner of doing it. The advocates of professional learning will smile when we tell them that this same faculty which we would have encouraged, is simply that of speaking good sense in English, without fee or reward, in common conversation. They will smile when we lay some stress upon it; but in reality it is no such trifle as they imagine. Look into the huts of savages, and see, for there is nothing to listen to, the dismal blank of their stupid hours of silence; their professional avocations of war and hunting are over; and, having nothing to do, they have nothing to say. Turn to improved life, and you find conversation in all its forms the medium of something more than an idle pleasure; indeed, a very active agent in circulating and forming the opinions, tastes, and feelings of a whole people. It makes of itself a considerable affair. Its topics are the most promiscuous—all those which do not belong to any particular province. As for its power and influence, we may fairly say that it is of just the same consequence to a man's immediate society, how he talks, as how he acts. Now of all those who furnish their share to rational conversation, a mere adept in his own art is universally admitted to be the worst. The sterility and uninterestingness of such a person's social hours are quite proverbial. Or if he escape being dull, it is only by launching into ill-timed, learned loquacity. We do not desire of him lectures or speeches; and he has nothing else to give. Among benches he may be powerful; but seated on a chair he is quite another person. On the other hand, we may affirm, that one of the best companions is a man who, to the accuracy and research of a profession, has joined a free exclusive acquaintance with various learning, and caught from it the spirit of general observation.

Having thus shown that a liberal education is a real benefit to the subjects of it, as members of society, in the various duties and circumstances and accidents of life, he goes on, in the next place, to show that, over and above those direct services which might fairly be expected of it, it actually subverts the discharge of those particular functions, and



the pursuit of those particular advantages, which are connected with professional exertion, and to which professional education is directed:

We admit [he observes] that when a person makes a business of one pursuit, he is in the right way to eminence in it; and that divided attention will rarely give excellence in many. But our assent will go no further. For, to think that the way to prepare a person for excelling in any one pursuit (and that is the only point in hand), is to fetter his early studies, and cramp the first development of his mind, by a reference to the exigencies of that pursuit barely, is a very different notion, and one which, we apprehend, deserves to be exploded rather than received. Possibly a few of the abstract insulated kinds of learning might be approached in that way. The exceptions to be made are very few, and need not be recited. But for the acquisition of professional and practical ability such maxims are death to it. The main ingredients of that ability are requisite knowledge and cultivated faculties; but, of the two, the latter is by far the chief. A man of well-improved faculties has the command of another's knowledge. A man without them, has not the command of his own.

Of the intellectual powers, the judgment is that which takes the foremost lead in life. How to form it to the two habits it ought to possess, of exactness and vigor, is the problem. It would be ignorant presumption so much as to hint at any routine of method by which these qualities may with certainty be imparted to every or any understanding. Still, however, we may safely lay it down that they are not to be got "by a gatherer of simples," but are the combined essence and extracts of many different things, drawn from much varied reading and discipline, first, and observation afterwards. For if there be a single intelligible point on this head, it is that a man who has been trained to think upon one subject or for one subject only, will never be a good judge even in that one; whereas the enlargement of his circle gives him increased knowledge and power in a rapidly increasing ratio. So much do ideas act, not as solitary units, but by grouping and combination; and so clearly do all the things that fall within the proper province of the same faculty of the mind, intertwine with and support each other. Judgment lives as it were by comparison and discrimination. Can it be doubted, then, whether the range and extent of that assemblage of things upon which it is practiced in its first essays are of use to its power?

To open our way a little further on this matter, we will define what we mean by the power of judgment; and then try to ascertain among what

kind of studies the improvement of it may be expected at all.

Judgment does not stand here for a certain homely, useful quality of intellect, that guards a person from committing mistakes to the injury of his fortunes or common reputation; but for that master-principle of business, literature, and talent, which gives him strength in any subject he chooses to grapple with, and enables him to seize the strong point in it. Whether this definition be metaphysically correct or not, it comes home to the substance of our inquiry. It describes the power that every one desires to possess when he comes to act in a profession, or elsewhere; and corresponds with our best idea of a cultivated mind.

Next, it will not be denied, that in order to do any good to the judgment, the mind must be employed upon such subjects as come within the cognizance of that faculty, and give some real exercise to its perceptions. Here we have a rule of selection by which the different parts of learning may be classed for our purpose. Those which belong to the province of the judgment are religion (in its evidences and interpretation), ethics, history, eloquence, poetry, theories of general speculation, the fine arts, and works of wit. Great as the variety of these large divisions of learning may appear, they are all held in union by two capital principles of connection. First, they are all quarried out of one and the same great subject of man's moral, social, and feeling nature. And secondly, they are all under the control (more or less strict) of the same power of moral reason.

If these studies [he continues] be such as give a direct play and exercise to the faculty of the judgment, then they are the true basis of education for the active and inventive powers, whether destined for a profession or any other use. Miscellaneous as the assemblage may appear, of history, eloquence, poetry, ethics, *etc.*, blended together, they will all conspire in an union of effect. They are necessary mutually to explain and interpret each other. The knowledge derived from them all will amalgamate, and the habits of a mind versed and practiced in them by turns will join to produce a richer vein of thought and of more general and practical application than could be obtained of any single one, as the fusion of the metals into Corinthian brass gave the artist his most ductile and perfect material. Might we venture to imitate an author (whom indeed it is much safer to take as an authority than to attempt to copy), Lord Bacon, in some of his concise illustrations of the comparative utility of the different studies,<sup>1</sup> we should say that history would give fullness, moral philosophy strength, and poetry elevation to the understanding. Such in reality is the natural force and

<sup>1</sup>See Bacon's essay, *Of Studies*.



tendency of the studies; but there are few minds susceptible enough to derive from them any sort of virtue adequate to those high expressions. We must be contented therefore to lower our panegyric to this, that a person cannot avoid receiving some infusion and tincture, at least, of those several qualities, from that course of diversified reading. One thing is unquestionable, that the elements of general reason are not to be found fully and truly expressed in any one kind of study; and that he who would wish to know her idiom, must read it in many books.

If different studies are useful for aiding, they are still more useful for correcting each other; for as they have their particular merits severally, so they have their defects, and the most extensive acquaintance with one can produce only an intellect either too flashy or too jejune, or infected with some other fault of confined reading. History, for example, shows things as they are, that is, the morals and interests of men disfigured and perverted by all their imperfections of passion, folly, and ambition; philosophy strips the picture too much; poetry adorns it too much; the concentrated lights of the three correct the false peculiar coloring of each, and show us the truth. The right mode of thinking upon it is to be had from them taken all together, as every one must know who has seen their united contributions of thought and feeling expressed in the masculine sentiment of our immortal statesman, Mr. Burke,<sup>1</sup> whose eloquence is inferior only to his more admirable wisdom. If any mind improved like his, is to be our instructor, we must go to the fountain head of things as he did, and study not his works but his method; by the one we may become feeble imitators, by the other arrive at some ability of our own. But, as all biography assures us, he, and every other able thinker, has been formed, not by a parsimonious admeasurement of studies to some definite future object (which is Mr. Edgeworth's maxim), but by taking a wide and liberal compass, and thinking a great deal on many subjects with no better end in view than because the exercise was one which made them more rational and intelligent beings.

But I must bring these extracts to an end. To-day I have confined myself to saying that that training of the intellect, which is best for the individual himself, best enables him to discharge his duties to society. The philosopher, indeed, and the man of the world differ in their very notion, but the methods by which they are respectively formed are pretty much the same. The philosopher has the same command of matters of thought, which

the true citizen and gentleman has of matters of business and conduct. If then a practical end must be assigned to a university course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world. It neither confines its views to particular professions on the one hand, nor creates heroes or inspires genius on the other. Works indeed of genius fall under no art; heroic minds come under no rule; a university is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracles of nature it has before now contained within its precincts. Nor is it content on the other hand with forming the critic or the experimentalist, the economist or the engineer, though such too it includes within its scope. But a university training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society, he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak and when to be silent; he is able to converse, he is able to listen; he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably, when he has nothing to impart himself; he is ever ready, yet never in the way; he is a pleasant companion, and a comrade you can depend upon; he knows when

<sup>1</sup>Edmund Burke (1729-1797).

to be serious and when to trifle, and he has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect. He has the repose of a mind which lives in itself, while it lives in the world, and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public, and supports him in retirement, without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm. The art which tends to make a man all this, is in the object which it pursues as useful as the art of wealth or the art of health, though it is less susceptible of method, and less tangible, less certain, less complete in its result.

## ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809-1892)

Tennyson's father was a clergyman, and his mother the daughter of a clergyman. To them were born twelve children, one of whom died in infancy. Their fourth child was Alfred, who was born at Somersby, in Lincolnshire, on 6 August, 1809. Somersby was at that time a village of less than a hundred inhabitants, and the children of the Rev. George Tennyson had a country upbringing. The rectory and the garden at Somersby, the surrounding fen country, and the Lincolnshire farmers—all these made a deep impression upon Alfred and remained abiding influences upon which later experiences were, so to say, grafted. When he was eight years old Alfred was sent to the grammar school at Louth, about ten miles north of Somersby. There he spent more than three years, miserable years which he hated at the time and hated afterwards in memory so deeply that he would never revisit the school. It is said that he was bullied both by a brutal schoolmaster and by his school-fellows. At the end of this period he went back to Somersby and completed his preparation for the University under his father's guidance. At the same time he was writing poetry, had indeed been writing more or less poetry from early childhood. "The first poetry that moved me," he later said, "was my own at five years old." To this influence others succeeded, that of Scott, and then Byron's. When Byron died in 1824, Tennyson later said, "I thought everything was over and finished for every one—that nothing else mattered. I remember I walked out alone and carved 'Byron is dead' into the sandstone." And in 1827 Tennyson published with his brother Charles his first volume, *Poems by Two Brothers*. Early in the following year the two brothers went up to Cambridge, where they entered Trinity College. Tennyson probably never felt quite at home in Cambridge, yet the friendships he made there had a deep influence upon him. He became a member of a group known as "The Apostles," a band "of Platonic-Wordsworthian-Coleridgean-anti-utilitarians," as one of their number afterwards called them, and these morally earnest, theologically liberal young men did much to convince Tennyson that as a poet it was his office not merely to give pleasure to his readers but to become the spiritual guide of his age. Moreover, one of the "Apostles" was Arthur Henry Hallam, son of the historian, an apparently brilliant young man, who became Tennyson's closest friend, with results that markedly colored both his life and his poetry.

Meanwhile poetry continued to be written. In 1829 Tennyson won the Chancellor's Medal with a blank-verse poem called *Timbuctoo*, and in 1830 he published his second volume, *Poems Chiefly Lyrical*. In 1831 he left Cambridge without being able to secure a degree. In December, 1832 (the volume is dated 1833), he published more verse, under the title *Poems*. This volume and the volume of 1830 contained some of the poems by which Tennyson is still best known, but there were few to perceive that a great poet had made his appearance. Not only so, but, at least partly because of injudicious praise given the *Poems* by Hallam and other young friends, this volume was seized on for destruction by Lockhart, who published a merciless attack on it in the *Quarterly Review*. Tennyson was always extremely sensitive to criticism, and in his later years would never tolerate it even from his closest friends. So severely wounded was he by Lockhart's article that he did not publish another volume for ten years—years spent in study, writing, and the careful revision of those of his earlier poems which he wished to republish.

In September, 1833, Hallam died suddenly in Vienna, causing Tennyson the greatest sorrow of his life. He almost immediately began writing the "Elegies" which gradually grew in number until they were finally published under the title *In Memoriam A. H. H.* in 1850. Eight years before, in 1842, he had published *English Idyls*, which had at once been recognized as an important volume and had given him a secure place in the world of letters. In 1845 he had been granted a pension, and in 1847 he had published *The Princess*. At length in 1850 he felt able to marry Emily Sellwood, to whom he had been engaged for some thirteen years. In the same year he was appointed, in succession to Wordsworth, Poet Laureate. His position as the great poet of the age was now secure, and during the remainder of his long life all, or nearly all, that he wrote contributed to the steady growth of his almost fabulous reputation among his contemporaries. Shortly after his marriage he acquired Farringford, on the Isle of Wight. In 1852 was published the great *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, in 1855 *Maud*, and in 1859 the first group of *Idyls of the King*. More *Idyls* were published in 1869 and in 1872. In 1864 *Enoch Arden* was published. Shortly before 1870 Tennyson built Aldworth, near Haslemere in Surrey, and thenceforth his time was divided between his new home and Far-



ringford. In 1875 he published *Queen Mary*, the first of some half-dozen plays which he wrote. In January, 1884, he was created Baron of Aldworth and Farringford, an honor which he is said to have accepted reluctantly and only "for the sake of literature," but an honor, too, which not unfairly indicates the exalted position he had attained in the eyes of the whole English-speaking world. He was by this time an old man, but he continued to the last to write and publish poetry which not only maintained but even added to his reputation. He died on 6 October, 1892, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Tennyson was in a peculiar sense the poet of his age. In his pages we read its littleness and its greatness—its religious doubts and insecure faith, its moral primness, its muddled politics, its ugly all-enveloping industrialism, its confidence in human progress and in the worth of individual endeavor, its pride of achievement, its active sense of a great past to be lived up to, and its noble—if perhaps too emotional and thoughtless—patriotism. Yet at the same time Tennyson

was curiously different from his age. One who knows only the legendary Tennyson comes with some surprise on Mr. Edmund Gosse's description of him as "a gaunt, black, touzled man, rough in speech, brooding like an old gypsy over his inch of clay pipe stuffed with shag and sucking in port wine with gusto"—a description confirmed by Carlyle's portrait: "A fine, large-featured, dim-eyed, bronze-colored, shaggy-headed man is Alfred: dusty, smoky, free and easy: who swims, outwardly and inwardly, with great composure in an articulate element as of tranquil chaos and tobacco smoke; great now and then when he does emerge; a most restful, brotherly, solid-hearted man." The truth is that Tennyson's was a complex, if not divided, nature. He was a great public and civic figure, the almost official Victorian guide through life's mazes, but he was also a serious, subtle, painstaking craftsman in verse, and he was at bottom a heavy-hearted mystic, anxious to be alone with his moods, and never perhaps so truly himself as in the purely lyric portions of his poetry.

### THE POET<sup>1</sup>

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of  
scorn,  
The love of love.

He saw through life and death, through good  
and ill, 5  
He saw through his own soul.  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay; with echoing feet he threaded  
The secretest walks of fame: 10  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were  
headed  
And winged with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,  
And of so fierce a flight,  
From Calpe<sup>2</sup> unto Caucasus they sung, 15  
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore  
Them earthward till they lit;  
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,  
The fruitful wit 20

Cleaving took root, and springing forth anew  
Where'er they fell, behold,  
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew  
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnished all abroad to fling 25  
The wingéd shafts of truth,  
To throng with stately blooms the breathing  
spring  
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,  
Though one did fling the fire; 30  
Heaven flowed upon the soul in many dreams  
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world  
Like one great garden showed,  
And through the wreaths of floating dark up-  
curled, 35  
Rare sunrise flowed.

And Freedom reared in that august sunrise  
Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burning eyes  
Melted like snow. 40

There was no blood upon her maiden robes  
Sunned by those orient skies;  
But round about the circles of the globes  
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame  
WISDOM, a name to shake 46  
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.  
And when she spake,

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1830. Tennyson frequently revised his poems as they were reprinted in successive editions, but the dates appended to those here printed are in general simply those of first publication.

<sup>2</sup>Gibraltar.

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,  
 And as the lightning to the thunder 50  
 Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,  
 Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No sword  
 Of wrath her right arm whirled, 54  
 But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word  
 She shook the world.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT<sup>1</sup>

### PART I

ON EITHER side the river lie  
 Long fields of barley and of rye,  
 That clothe the world<sup>2</sup> and meet the sky;  
 And through the field the road runs by  
 To many-towered Camelot;<sup>3</sup> 5  
 And up and down the people go,  
 Gazing where the lilies blow  
 Round an island there below,  
 The island of Shalott.<sup>4</sup>

Willows whiten, aspens quiver, 10  
 Little breezes dusk and shiver  
 Through the wave that runs for ever  
 By the island in the river  
 Flowing down to Camelot.  
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers, 15  
 Overlook a space of flowers,  
 And the silent isle imbowers  
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,  
 Slide the heavy barges trailed 20  
 By slow horses; and unhailed  
 The shallop flitteth silken-sailed  
 Skimming down to Camelot:  
 But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
 Or at the casement seen her stand? 25  
 Or is she known in all the land,  
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
 In among the bearded barley,  
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly 30  
 From the river winding clearly,  
 Down to towered Camelot;

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1832. Tennyson's earliest handling of a theme from Arthurian legend. When he later wrote *Lancelot and Elaine* Tennyson adopted a different version of the story he tells here.

<sup>2</sup>Open country.

<sup>3</sup>The legendary city where King Arthur held his court, commonly supposed to be in Cornwall.

<sup>4</sup>In Malory (*Morte d'Arthur*, Bk. XVIII) this word is Astolat. An Italian version of the story of Elaine is said to have suggested Tennyson's poem, which would account for the form Shalott.

And by the moon the reaper weary,  
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
 Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy 35  
 Lady of Shalott."

### PART II

There she weaves by night and day  
 A magic web with colors gay.  
 She has heard a whisper say,  
 A curse is on her if she stay 40  
 To look down to Camelot.  
 She knows not what the curse may be,  
 And so she weaveth steadily,  
 And little other care hath she,  
 The Lady of Shalott. 45

And moving through a mirror clear  
 That hangs before her all the year,  
 Shadows of the world appear.  
 There she sees the highway near  
 Winding down to Camelot; 50  
 There the river eddy whirls,  
 And there the surly village-churls,  
 And the red cloaks of market girls,  
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad, 55  
 An abbot on an ambling pad,  
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
 Or long-haired page in crimson clad,  
 Goes by to towered Camelot;  
 And sometimes through the mirror blue 60  
 The knights come riding two and two:  
 She hath no loyal knight and true,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
 To weave the mirror's magic sights, 65  
 For often through the silent nights  
 A funeral, with plumes and lights  
 And music, went to Camelot;  
 Or when the moon was overhead,  
 Came two young lovers lately wed: 70  
 "I am half sick of shadows," said  
 The Lady of Shalott. *11 Key to poem*

### PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
 The sun came dazzling through the leaves, 75  
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
 A red-cross knight for ever kneeled  
 To a lady in his shield,  
 That sparkled on the yellow field, 80  
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,  
 Like to some branch of stars we see

Hung in the golden Galaxy.<sup>1</sup>  
 The bridle bells rang merrily  
 As he rode down to Camelot;  
 And from his blazoned baldric slung  
 A mighty silver bugle hung,  
 And as he rode his armor rung,  
 Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
 Thick-jeweled shone the saddle-leather,  
 The helmet and the helmet-feather  
 Burned like one burning flame together,  
 As he rode down to Camelot;  
 As often through the purple night,  
 Below the starry clusters bright,  
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;  
 On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;  
 From underneath his helmet flowed  
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
 As he rode down to Camelot.  
 From the bank and from the river  
 He flashed into the crystal mirror,  
 "Tirra lirra," by the river  
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
 She made three paces through the room,  
 She saw the water-lily bloom,  
 She saw the helmet and the plume,  
 She looked down to Camelot.  
 Out flew the web and floated wide;  
 The mirror cracked from side to side;  
 "The curse is come upon me," cried  
 The Lady of Shalott.

#### PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
 The pale yellow woods were waning,  
 The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
 Heavily the low sky raining  
 Over towered Camelot;  
 Down she came and found a boat  
 Beneath a willow left afloat,  
 And round about the prow she wrote  
 The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse  
 Like some bold seer in a trance,  
 Seeing all his own mischance—  
 With a glassy countenance  
 Did she look to Camelot.  
 And at the closing of the day  
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
 The broad stream bore her far away,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

<sup>1</sup>The Milky Way.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
 That loosely flew to left and right—  
 The leaves upon her falling light—  
 Through the noises of the night  
 She floated down to Camelot;  
 And as the boat-head wound along  
 The willowy hills and fields among,  
 They heard her singing her last song,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
 And her eyes were darkened wholly,  
 Turned to towered Camelot.  
 For ere she reached upon the tide  
 The first house by the water-side,  
 Singing in her song she died,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
 By garden-wall and gallery,  
 A gleaming shape she floated by,  
 Dead-pale between the houses high,  
 Silent into Camelot.  
 Out upon the wharfs they came,  
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
 And round the prow they read her name,  
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?  
 And in the lighted palace near  
 Died the sound of royal cheer;  
 And they crossed themselves for fear,  
 All the knights at Camelot:  
 But Lancelot mused a little space;  
 He said, "She has a lovely face;  
 God in his mercy lend her grace,  
 The Lady of Shalott."

#### CENONE<sup>2</sup>

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
 The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,  
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to  
 pine,

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1832. Cenone was the daughter of a river-god, and the wife of Paris, son of King Priam of Troy. Paris was asked to judge which of the three goddesses, Hera, Pallas Athena, and Aphrodite, was the fairest, and each tried to influence his judgment in her own favor by offering him a reward. Aphrodite said she would give him the most beautiful of women for a wife, whereupon Paris immediately judged her the fairest of the goddesses. Under Aphrodite's care he then left Cenone and sailed for Sparta, whence he bore away Helen to Troy, thus bringing about the Trojan war. Ida is the name of a mountain range forming the southern boundary of the territory of Troas, or Ilium. It was in these mountains that Paris was brought up by shepherds; having been abandoned there as a baby after his mother dreamed that he would bring ruin on Troy. Gargarus is the name of one of the highest peaks of Ida.



And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand 5  
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down  
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars  
The long brook falling through the cloven  
ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus 10  
Stands up and takes the morning; but in front  
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Troas and Ilion's columned citadel,  
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
Mournful Cenone, wandering forlorn 15  
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her  
neck

Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,  
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade 20  
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper  
cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill;  
The grasshopper is silent in the grass; 25  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.  
The purple flower droops, the golden bee  
Is lily-cradled; I alone awake.  
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love, 30  
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,  
And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Hear me, O earth, hear me, O hills, O caves 35  
That house the cold crowned snake! O moun-  
tain brooks,  
I am the daughter of a River-God,  
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all  
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls  
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed, 40  
A cloud that gathered shape;<sup>1</sup> for it may be  
That, while I speak of it, a little while  
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 45  
I waited underneath the dawning hills;  
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,  
And dewy dark aloft the mountain pine.  
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
Leading a jet-black goat white-horned, white-  
hooved, 50  
Came up from reedy Simois<sup>2</sup> all alone.

<sup>1</sup>The walls of Troy were said to have arisen in obedience to Apollo's music.

<sup>2</sup>A stream which rises on Mount Ida.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Far-off the torrent called me from the cleft;  
Far up the solitary morning smote  
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-  
dropped eyes 55

I sat alone; white-breasted like a star  
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin  
Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny hair  
Clustered about his temples like a God's;  
And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow  
brightens 60  
When the wind blows the foam, and all my  
heart  
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he  
came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white  
palm  
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,<sup>3</sup> 65  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I looked  
And listened, the full-flowing river of speech  
Came down upon my heart:

"My own Cenone,  
Beautiful-browed Cenone, my own soul,  
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind in-  
graven 70  
"For the most fair," would seem to award it  
thine,  
As lovelier than whatever Oread<sup>4</sup> haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married  
brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 75  
He pressed the blossom of his lips to mine,  
And added, 'This cast was upon the board,  
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods  
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere  
due; 80  
But light-foot Iris<sup>5</sup> brought it yester-eve,  
Delivering, that to me, by common voice  
Elected umpire, Herë comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each 84  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave  
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight; one silvery cloud<sup>90</sup>  
Had lost his way between the piny sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they  
came,  
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded  
bower,

<sup>3</sup>A golden apple like those which grew in the gardens of the Hesperides.

<sup>4</sup>Mountain-nymph.

<sup>5</sup>Messenger of the gods.

And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,  
 Violet, amaranthus, and asphodel,<sup>1</sup> 95  
 Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,  
 And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,  
 This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
 With bunch and berry and flower through and  
 through. 100

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
 And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and  
 leaned

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew. 104  
 Then first I heard the voice of her to whom  
 Coming through heaven, like a light that grows  
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods  
 Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
 Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
 Unquestioned, overflowing revenue 110  
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a  
 vale

And river-sundered champaign clothed with  
 corn,  
 Or labored mine undrainable of ore. 113  
 Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,  
 From many an inland town and haven large,  
 Mast-thronged beneath her shadowing citadel  
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,  
 'Which in all action is the end of all; 120  
 Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred  
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbor  
 crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
 Fail from the scepter-staff. Such boon from  
 me,

From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee king-  
 born, 125

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,  
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in  
 power

Only, are likest Gods, who have attained  
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss 130  
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit  
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of  
 power 134  
 Flattered his spirit; but Pallas where she  
 stood

Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs  
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear  
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold, 138

<sup>1</sup>Amaranthus is the modern marjoram; asphodel is a lily-shaped plant.

The while, above, her full and earnest eye  
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek  
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply:  
 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,  
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power.  
 Yet not for power (power of herself 144  
 Would come uncalled for) but to live by law,  
 Acting the law we live by without fear;  
 And, because right is right, to follow right  
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts. 150  
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,  
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,  
 If gazing on divinity disrobed  
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair, 155  
 Unbiased by self-profit, O, rest thee sure  
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,  
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,  
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,  
 To push thee forward through a life of shocks,  
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow 161  
 Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,  
 Circled through all experiences, pure law,  
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased,  
 And Paris pondered, and I cried, 'O Paris, 165  
 Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,  
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Idalian<sup>2</sup> Aphrodite beautiful, 170  
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian  
 wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew  
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep  
 hair

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat 174  
 And shoulder; from the violets her light foot  
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form  
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches  
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes, 180  
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh  
 Half-whispered in his ear, 'I promise thee  
 The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'  
 She spoke and laughed; I shut my sight for  
 fear;

But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm,  
 And I beheld great Heracles' angry eyes, 186  
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
 And I was left alone within the bower;

<sup>2</sup>Idalion and Paphos were towns in Cyprus where Aphrodite was specially worshipped.

And from that time to this I am alone,  
And I shall be alone until I die. 190

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?  
My love hath told me so a thousand times.  
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday, 194  
When I passed by, a wild and wanton pard,<sup>1</sup>  
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail  
Crouched fawning in the weed. Most loving  
is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips  
pressed 199  
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as autumn rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They<sup>2</sup> came, they cut away my tallest pines,  
My tall dark pines, that plumed the craggy  
ledge 205

High over the blue gorge, and all between  
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
Fostered the callow eaglet—from beneath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark  
morn 209

The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat  
Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Enone see the morning mist  
Sweep through them; never see them overlaid  
With narrow moonlit slips of silver cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trembling  
stars. 215

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her  
The Abominable,<sup>3</sup> that uninvited came 220  
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
And bred this change; that I might speak my  
mind,

And tell her to her face how much I hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men. 225

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,  
In this green valley, under this green hill,  
Even on this hand, and sitting on this stone?  
Sealed it with kisses? watered it with tears? 230  
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!  
O happy heaven, how canst thou see my face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?  
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,

There are enough unhappy on this earth, 235  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live;  
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.  
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die. 240

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more and  
more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost  
hills, 245

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born. Her child!—a shudder comes  
Across me: never child be born of me, 250  
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me  
Walking the cold and starless road of death 255  
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go  
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth  
Talk with the wild Cassandra,<sup>4</sup> for she says  
A fire dances before her, and a sound 260  
Rings ever in her ears of arméd men.  
What this may be I know not, but I know  
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,  
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

## THE PALACE OF ART<sup>5</sup>

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,  
Dear soul, for all is well."

<sup>4</sup>Daughter of Priam, who predicted the destruction of Troy but was thought to be mad.

<sup>5</sup>Published in 1832, but much altered in later editions, Tennyson prefixed to the poem the following explanation:

I send you here a sort of allegory  
(For you will understand it), of a soul,  
A sinful soul possessed of many gifts,  
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,  
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,  
That did love Beauty only (Beauty seen  
In all varieties of mold and mind)  
And Knowledge for its beauty; or if Good,  
Good only for its beauty, seeing not  
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters  
That dote upon each other, friends to man,  
Living together under the same roof,  
And never can be sundered without tears.  
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be  
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie  
Howling in outer darkness. Not for this  
Was common clay ta'en from the common earth,  
Molded by God, and tempered with the tears  
Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

<sup>1</sup>Leopard.

<sup>2</sup>Shipwrights, who cut down the pines to make ships for Paris's journey to Sparta.

<sup>3</sup>Eris, goddess of strife.



A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnished  
brass, 5  
I chose. The rangéd ramparts bright  
From level meadow-bases of deep grass  
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf  
The rock rose clear, or winding stair. 10  
My soul would live alone unto herself  
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round,"  
I said,  
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast  
shade 15  
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:  
"Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
In this great mansion, that is built for me,  
So royal-rich and wide." 20

Four courts I made, East, West and South  
and North,  
In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth  
A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran a  
row 25  
Of cloisters, branched like mighty woods,  
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
Of spouted fountain-floods;

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
That lent broad verge to distant lands, 30  
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky  
Dipped down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one swell  
Across the mountain streamed below  
In misty folds, that floating as they fell 35  
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seemed  
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
A cloud of incense of all odor steamed  
From out a golden cup. 40

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze  
upon  
My palace with unblinded eyes,  
While this great bow will waver in the sun,  
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never failed, 45  
And, while day sank or mounted higher,  
The light aerial gallery, golden-railed,  
Burned like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stained and  
traced,  
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires 50  
From shadowed grots of arches interlaced,  
And tipped with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
Through which the livelong day my soul did  
pass, 55  
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,  
All various, each a perfect whole  
From living Nature, fit for every mood  
And change of my still soul. 60

For some were hung with arras green and blue,  
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
Where with puffed cheek the belted hunter  
blew  
His wreathéd bugle-horn.

One seemed all dark and red—a tract of sand,  
And some one pacing there alone, 66  
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,  
Lit with a low large moon.

One showed an iron coast and angry waves.  
You seemed to hear them climb and fall 70  
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing  
caves,  
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
By herds upon an endless plain,  
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low 75  
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.  
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind  
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,  
And hoary to the wind. 80

And one a foreground black with stones and  
slags;  
Beyond, a line of heights; and higher  
All barred with long white cloud the scornful  
crag;  
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight  
poured 85  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,  
As fit for every mood of mind, 90  
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there,  
Not less than truth designed.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
 In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,  
 Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx 95  
 Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-walled city on the sea,  
 Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
 Wound with white roses, slept Saint Cecily;<sup>1</sup>  
 An angel looked at her. 100

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise  
 A group of Houris<sup>2</sup> bowed to see  
 The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes  
 That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son<sup>3</sup> 105  
 In some fair space of sloping greens  
 Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
 And watched by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
 To list a foot-fall, ere he saw 110  
 The wood-nymph, stayed the Ausonian King<sup>4</sup>  
 to hear  
 Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrailed,  
 And many a tract of palm and rice,  
 The throne of Indian Cama<sup>5</sup> slowly sailed 115  
 A summer fanned with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasped,  
 From off her shoulder backward borne;  
 From one hand drooped a crocus; one hand  
 grasped  
 The mild bull's golden horn.<sup>6</sup> 120

Or else flushed Ganymede, his rosy thigh  
 Half-buried in the eagle's down,  
 Sole as a flying star shot through the sky  
 Above the pillared town.<sup>7</sup>

Nor these alone; but every legend fair 125  
 Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
 Carved out of Nature for itself was there,  
 Not less than life designed.

Then in the towers I placed great bells that  
 swung,  
 Moved of themselves, with silver sound; 130  
 And with choice paintings of wise men I hung  
 The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,  
 Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild;  
 And there the world-worn Dante grasped his  
 song, 135  
 And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;<sup>8</sup>  
 A million wrinkles carved his skin;  
 A hundred winters snowed upon his breast,  
 From cheek and throat and chin. 140

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
 Many an arch high up did lift,  
 And angels rising and descending met  
 With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely planned 145  
 With cycles of the human tale  
 Of this wide world, the times of every land  
 So wrought they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,  
 Toiled onward, pricked with goads and  
 stings; 150  
 Here played, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
 The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind  
 All force in bonds that might endure,  
 And here once more like some sick man de-  
 clined, 155  
 And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod; and those great bells  
 Began to chime. She took her throne;  
 She sat betwixt the shining oriels,  
 To sing her songs alone. 160

And through the topmost oriels' colored flame  
 Two godlike faces gazed below;  
 Plato the wise, and large-browed Verulam,<sup>9</sup>  
 The first of those who know.

And all those names that in their motion  
 were 165  
 Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
 Betwixt the slender shafts were blazoned fair  
 In diverse raiment strange;

<sup>1</sup>St. Cecilia was said to have invented the organ.

<sup>2</sup>The virgins who, according to the Koran, attend upon the faithful Mahometan in Paradise.

<sup>3</sup>King Arthur. Tennyson tells the story of his death in *The Passing of Arthur*.

<sup>4</sup>Numa, legislator and second king of Rome, was said to have been instructed in the art of government by the wood-nymph Egeria.

<sup>5</sup>The god of love in Hindu mythology.

<sup>6</sup>Europa while gathering flowers was carried off by Zeus under the form of a bull.

<sup>7</sup>Ganymede was carried off by the eagle of Zeus to become Zeus's cup-bearer.

<sup>8</sup>Homer.

<sup>9</sup>Francis Bacon.

Through which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,

Flushed in her temples and her eyes, 170  
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,<sup>1</sup>  
drew

Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,  
More than my soul to hear her echoed song 175  
Throb through the ribbed stone;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,  
Joying to feel herself alive,  
Lord over Nature, lord of the visible earth,  
Lord of the senses five; 180

Communing with herself: "All these are mine,  
And let the world have peace or wars,  
'Tis one to me." She—when young night  
divine  
Crowned dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils— 185  
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,<sup>2</sup>  
And pure quintessences of precious oils  
In hollowed moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapped her hands and  
cried,  
"I marvel if my still delight 190  
In this great house so royal-rich and wide  
Be flattered to the height.

"O all things fair to sate my various eyes!  
O shapes and hues that please me well!  
O silent faces of the Great and Wise, 195  
My Gods, with whom I dwell!

"O Godlike isolation which art mine,  
I can but count thee perfect gain,  
What time I watch the darkening droves of  
swine  
That range on yonder plain. 200

"In filthy sloughs they roll a purient skin,  
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep;  
And oft some brainless devil enters in,  
And drives them to the deep."<sup>3</sup>

Then of the moral instinct would she prate 205  
And of the rising from the dead,  
As hers by right of full-accomplished Fate;  
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and deed.  
I care not what the sects may brawl. 210  
I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all."

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
Flashed through her as she sat alone,  
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth, 215  
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prospered; so three  
years  
She prospered; on the fourth she fell,  
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,  
Struck through with pangs of hell.<sup>4</sup>

Lest she should fail and perish utterly, 221  
God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abysmal deeps of personality,  
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turned  
her sight 225  
The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote, "Mene, mene,"<sup>5</sup> and divided quite  
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude  
Fell on her, from which mood was born 230  
Scorn of herself; again, from out that mood  
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of strength," she  
said,  
"My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were  
laid 235  
Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood  
Uncertain shapes; and unawares  
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of  
blood,  
And horrible nightmares, 240

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,  
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon she  
came,  
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light 245  
Or power of movement, seemed my soul,  
Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
Making for one sure goal;

<sup>1</sup>A colossal Egyptian statue (really of Amenophis) which was said to give forth a musical sound when first struck by the rays of the rising sun.

<sup>2</sup>In lamps arranged like wreaths and garlands.

<sup>3</sup>See St. Mark, v, 13.

<sup>4</sup>See Acts, xii, 21-23.

<sup>5</sup>See the account of Belshazzar's feast, Daniel, v.



A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand,  
 Left on the shore, that hears all night 250  
 The plunging seas draw backward from the  
 land  
 Their moon-led waters white;

A star that with the choral starry dance  
 Joined not, but stood, and standing saw  
 The hollow orb of moving Circumstance 255  
 Rolled round by one fixed law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curled  
 "No voice," she shrieked in that lone hall,  
 "No voice breaks through the stillness of this  
 world;  
 One deep, deep silence all!" 260

She, moldering with the dull earth's moldering  
 sod,  
 Inwrapped tenfold in slothful shame,  
 Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
 Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally, 265  
 And nothing saw, for her despair,  
 But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
 No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
 And ever worse with growing time, 270  
 And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
 And all alone in crime.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round  
 With blackness as a solid wall,  
 Far off she seemed to hear the dully sound 275  
 Of human footsteps fall:

As in strange lands a traveler walking slow,  
 In doubt and great perplexity,  
 A little before moonrise hears the low  
 Moan of an unknown sea; 280

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound  
 Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry  
 Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, "I have  
 found  
 A new land, but I die."

She howled aloud, "I am on fire within. 285  
 There comes no murmur of reply.  
 What is it that will take away my sin,  
 And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,  
 She threw her royal robes away. 290  
 "Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,  
 "Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are  
 So lightly, beautifully built;  
 Perchance I may return with others there 295  
 When I have purged my guilt."

### THE LOTOS-EATERS<sup>1</sup>

"COURAGE!" he<sup>2</sup> said, and pointed toward the  
 land,  
 "This mounting wave will roll us shoreward  
 soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land  
 In which it seeméd always afternoon.  
 All round the coast the languid air did swoon, 5  
 Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.  
 Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;  
 And, like a downward smoke, the slender  
 stream  
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did  
 seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward  
 smoke, 10  
 Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;  
 And some through wavering lights and shad-  
 ows broke,  
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.  
 They saw the gleaming river seaward flow  
 From the inner land; far off, three mountain-  
 tops, 15  
 Three silent pinnacles of agéd snow,  
 Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with show-  
 ery drops,  
 Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven  
 copse.

The charmed sunset lingered low adown  
 In the red West; through mountain clefts the  
 dale 20

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
 Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale  
 And meadow, set with slender galingale;  
 A land where all things always seemed the  
 same!

And round about the keel with faces pale, 25  
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,  
 Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave  
 To each, but whoso did receive of them 30  
 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave  
 Far far away did seem to mourn and rave  
 On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,  
 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1832. The land of the lotos.eaters was visited  
 by Ulysses, and Tennyson drew the framework of his poem  
 from the *Odyssey*, IX, 82-07. The lotos referred to is an  
 African plant, sometimes called the Cyrenean lotos.

<sup>2</sup>Ulysses.

And deep-asleep he seemed, yet all awake, 35  
And music in his ears his beating heart did  
make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,  
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;  
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,  
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore 40  
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,  
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.  
Then some one said, "We will return no  
more";

And all at once they sang, "Our island home  
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer  
roam." 45

#### CHORIC SONG

##### I

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentler on the spirit lies, 5  
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the  
blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,  
And through the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers  
weep, 10  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in  
sleep.

##### II

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,  
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,  
While all things else have rest from weariness?  
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of things, 16  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings, 20  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;  
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,  
"There is no joy but calm!"—  
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown  
of things?

##### III

Lo! in the middle of the wood, 25  
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow 30  
Falls, and floats adown the air.  
Lo! sweetened with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow.  
Drops in a silent autumn night.

All its allotted length of days 35  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,  
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

##### IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea. 40  
Death is the end of life; ah, why  
Should life all labor be?  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last? 45  
All things are taken from us, and become  
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have  
To war with evil? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing wave? 50  
All things have rest, and ripen toward the  
grave  
In silence—ripen, fall, and cease:  
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or  
dreamful ease.

##### V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward  
stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem 55  
Falling asleep in a half-dream!  
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the  
height;  
To hear each other's whispered speech;  
Eating the Lotos day by day, 60  
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;  
To muse and brood and live again in memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy 66  
Heaped over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of  
brass!

##### VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives 70  
And their warm tears; but all hath suffered  
change;  
For surely now our household hearths are cold,  
Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold 75  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings  
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.  
Is there confusion in the little isle?  
Let what is broken so remain. 80  
The Gods are hard to reconcile;

'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
 There *is* confusion worse than death,  
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
 Long labor unto agéd breath, 85  
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars  
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-  
 stars.

## VII

But, propped on beds of amaranth and moly,<sup>1</sup>  
 How sweet—while warm airs lull us, blowing  
 lowly—  
 With half-dropped eyelid still, 90  
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
 To watch the long bright river drawing slowly  
 His waters from the purple hill—  
 To hear the dewy echoes calling  
 From cave to cave through the thick-twined  
 vine— 95  
 To watch the emerald-colored water falling  
 Through many a woven acanthus-wreath<sup>2</sup>  
 divine!  
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling  
 brine,  
 Only to hear were sweet, stretched out beneath  
 the pine.

## VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak, 100  
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek;  
 All day the wind breathes low with mellower  
 tone;  
 Through every hollow cave and alley lone  
 Round and round the spicy downs the yellow  
 Lotos-dust is blown.  
 We have had enough of action, and of motion 105  
 we,  
 Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when  
 the surge was seething free,  
 Where the wallowing monster spouted his  
 foam-fountains in the sea.  
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an  
 equal mind,  
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie re-  
 clined  
 On the hills like Gods together, careless of  
 mankind. 110  
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts  
 are hurled  
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds  
 are lightly curled  
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the  
 gleaming world;  
 Where they smile in secret, looking over  
 wasted lands,

<sup>1</sup>Amaranth was a fabled unfading flower; moly a fabled plant with black root and milk-white flower given by Hermes to Ulysses to protect him from the draught of Circe (*Odyssey*, x, 305).

<sup>2</sup>Acanthus is a plant with pendant leaves, reproduced on the capitals of Corinthian columns.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1842.

Blight and famine, plague and earthquake,  
 roaring deeps and fiery sands, 115  
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sink-  
 ing ships, and praying hands.  
 But they smile, they find a music centered  
 in a doleful song  
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient  
 tale of wrong,  
 Like a tale of little meaning though the words  
 are strong;  
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that  
 cleave the soil, 120  
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with en-  
 during toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine  
 and oil;  
 Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis  
 whispered—down in hell  
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian  
 valleys dwell,  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of as-  
 phodel. 125  
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than  
 toil, the shore  
 Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and  
 wave and oar;  
 O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not  
 wander more.

### YOU ASK ME, WHY, THOUGH ILL AT EASE<sup>3</sup>

You ask me, why, though ill at ease,  
 Within this region I subsist,  
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
 And languish for the purple seas.  
 It is the land that freemen till, 5  
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
 The land, where girt with friends or foes  
 A man may speak the thing he will;  
 A land of settled government,  
 A land of just and old renown, 10  
 Where Freedom slowly broadens down  
 From precedent to precedent;  
 Where faction seldom gathers head,  
 But, by degrees to fullness wrought,  
 The strength of some diffusive thought 15  
 Hath time and space to work and spread.  
 Should banded unions persecute  
 Opinion, and induce a time  
 When single thought is civil crime,  
 And individual freedom mute, 20  
 Though power should make from land to land  
 The name of Britain trebly great—  
 Though every channel of the State  
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—



Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth, 25  
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die  
The palms and temples of the South.

### ULYSSES<sup>1</sup>

IT LITTLE profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
Matched with an agéd wife, I mete<sup>2</sup> and dole  
Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not  
me. 5

I cannot rest from travel; I will drink  
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed  
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those  
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when  
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades<sup>3</sup> 10  
Vexed the dim sea. I am become a name;  
For always roaming with a hungry heart  
Much have I seen and known,—cities of men  
And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
Myself not least, but honored of them all,—  
And drunk delight of battle with my peers, 16  
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough  
Gleams that untraveled world whose margin  
fades 20  
For ever and for ever when I move.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!  
As though to breathe were life! Life piled  
on life

Were all too little, and of one to me 25  
Little remains; but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something more,  
A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard my-  
self,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30  
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
To whom I leave the scepter and the isle,—  
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil 35  
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild  
A rugged people, and through soft degrees  
Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
Most blameless is he, centered in the sphere  
Of common duties, decent not to fail 40  
In offices of tenderness, and pay  
Meet adoration to my household gods,

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1842. This imagined speech of Ulysses (essentially modern in character) after his return to Ithaca and Penelope (his "agéd wife") was suggested to Tennyson, not by Homer, but by Dante's *Inferno*, xxvi, 90-142.

<sup>2</sup>Measure.

<sup>3</sup>A group of seven stars whose rising and setting were anciently believed to be accompanied by much rain.

When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.  
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;  
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My  
mariners, 45  
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and  
thought with me,—  
That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
Free hearts, free foreheads,—you and I are  
old;

Old age hath yet his honor and his toil. 50  
Death closes all; but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;  
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs;  
the deep 55  
Moans round with many voices."Come, my  
friends.

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60  
Of all the western stars, until I die.  
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
Though much is taken, much abides; and  
though 65  
We are not now that strength which in old  
days

Moved earth and heaven, that which we are,  
we are,—  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. 70

### TITHONUS<sup>4</sup>

THE woods decay, the woods decay and fall,  
The vapors weep their burthen to the ground,  
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,  
And after many a summer dies the swan.  
Me only cruel immortality 5  
Consumes; I wither slowly in thine arms,  
Here at the quiet limit of the world,  
A white-haired shadow roaming like a dream  
The ever-silent spaces of the East, 9  
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.  
Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man—  
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,  
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seemed

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1860. The story of this poem is to be found in the Homeric *Hymn to Aphrodite*, 218-239. Tithonus was loved by Aurora, goddess of dawn, who made him immortal at his request. He, however, had neglected to ask for the perpetuation of his youth, so that he grew slowly older and more decrepit until he finally asked the goddess for death. As she could not give him death, she changed him into a grasshopper.

To his great heart none other than a God!  
 I asked thee, "Give me immortality." 15  
 Then didst thou grant mine asking with a  
 smile,  
 Like wealthy men who care not how they give.  
 But thy strong Hours<sup>1</sup> indignant worked their  
 wills,  
 And beat me down and marred and wasted  
 me,  
 And though they could not end me, left me  
 maimed 20  
 To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
 Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
 And all I was in ashes. Can thy love,  
 Thy beauty, make amends, though even now,  
 Close over us, the silver star, thy guide, 25  
 Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with  
 tears  
 To hear me? Let me go; take back thy gift.  
 Why should a man desire in any way  
 To vary from the kindly race of men,  
 Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance 30  
 Where all should pause, as is most meet for  
 all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart; there comes  
 A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.  
 Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals  
 From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders  
 pure, 35  
 And bosom beating with a heart renewed.  
 Thy cheek begins to redden through the  
 gloom,  
 Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,  
 Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild  
 team<sup>2</sup>  
 Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,  
 And shake the darkness from their loosened  
 manes, 41  
 And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
 In silence, then before thine answer given  
 Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek. 45  
 Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,  
 And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,  
 In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?  
 "The Gods themselves cannot recall their  
 gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another heart 50  
 In days far-off, and with what other eyes  
 I used to watch—if I be he that watched—  
 The lucid outline forming round thee; saw  
 The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;  
 Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my  
 blood 55  
 Glow with the glow that slowly crimsoned all  
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,  
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm  
 With kisses balmier than half-opening buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that kissed 60  
 Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,  
 Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,  
 While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.<sup>3</sup>

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East;  
 How can my nature longer mix with thine? 65  
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet  
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the  
 steam

Floats up from those dim fields about the  
 homes

Of happy men that have the power to die, 70  
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead.  
 Release me, and restore me to the ground.  
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave;  
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn,  
 I earth in earth forget these empty courts, 75  
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

### LOCKSLEY HALL<sup>4</sup>

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet  
 'tis early morn;  
 Leave me here and when you want me, sound  
 upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the  
 curlews<sup>5</sup> call,  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over  
 Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks  
 the sandy tracts, 5  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into  
 cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere  
 I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion<sup>6</sup> sloping slowly to  
 the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads,<sup>7</sup> rising  
 through the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled in a  
 silver braid. 10

Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing  
 a youth sublime  
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long  
 result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful  
 land reposed;  
 When I clung to all the present for the promise  
 that it closed;

<sup>1</sup>See the second note to *Cenone*, above, p. 418.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1842.

<sup>3</sup>Birds of the snipe family.

<sup>4</sup>The constellation.

<sup>5</sup>A group of stars.

<sup>1</sup>Goddesses of the seasons.

<sup>2</sup>The horses which drew Dawn's chariot.

When I dipped into the future far as human  
eye could see, 15  
Saw the vision of the world and all the wonder  
that would be.—

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the  
robin's breast;  
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself  
another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the  
burnished dove;  
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly  
turns to thoughts of love. 20

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than  
should be for one so young,  
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute  
observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and  
speak the truth to me,  
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being  
sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color  
and a light, 25  
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the  
northern night.

And she turned—her bosom shaken with a  
sudden storm of sighs—  
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of  
hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they  
should do me wrong;"  
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weep-  
ing, "I have loved thee long." 30

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned  
it in his glowing hands;  
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in  
golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on  
all the chords with might;  
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,  
passed in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear  
the corpses ring, 35  
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the  
fullness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch  
the stately ships,  
And our spirits rushed together at the touch-  
ing of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy,  
mine no more!  
O the deary, dreary moorland! O the barren,  
barren shore! 40

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all  
songs have sung,  
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a  
shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?— having known  
me—to decline  
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower  
heart than mine!

Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his level  
day by day, 45  
What is fine within thee growing coarse to  
sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art mated  
with a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will have  
weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have  
spent its novel force,  
Something better than his dog, a little dearer  
than his horse. 50

What is this? his eyes are heavy; think not  
they are glazed with wine.  
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take his  
hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is  
overwrought;  
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him  
with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to  
understand— 55  
Better thou wert dead before me, though I  
slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the  
heart's disgrace,  
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a  
last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the  
strength of youth!  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from  
the living truth! 60

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from hon-  
est Nature's rule!  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened  
forehead of the fool!



Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst  
thou less unworthy proved—  
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than  
ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which  
bears but bitter fruit? 65  
I will pluck it from my bosom, though my  
heart be at the root.

Never, though my mortal summers to such  
length of years should come  
As the many-wintered crow that leads the  
clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records  
of the mind?  
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as  
I knew her, kind? 70

I remember one that perished; sweetly did she  
speak and move;  
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at  
was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the  
love she bore?  
No—she never loved me truly; love is love for  
evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorned of devils!<sup>1</sup> this is  
truth the poet<sup>2</sup> sings, 75  
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remember-  
ing happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest  
thy heart be put to proof,  
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain  
is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art  
staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the  
shadows rise and fall. 80

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing  
to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widowed marriage-pillows, to the tears  
that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whis-  
pered by the phantom years,  
And a song from out the distance in the ringing  
of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient  
kindness on thy pain. 85  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get thee to  
thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a  
tender voice will cry.  
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy  
trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest rival  
brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from  
the mother's breast. 90

O, the child too clothes the father with a  
dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his; it will be worthy  
of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy  
petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching  
down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings—  
she herself was not exempt— 95  
Truly, she herself had suffered"—Perish in  
thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore  
should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither  
by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting  
upon days like these?  
Every door is barred with gold, and opens but  
to golden keys. 100

Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the  
markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy; what is that which  
I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the  
foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the  
winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt  
that Honor feels, 105  
And the nations do but murmur, sharling at  
each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that  
earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou won-  
drous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt  
before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and the  
tumult of my life; 110

<sup>1</sup>The allusion is to *Paradise Lost*, Bks. I and II.

<sup>2</sup>Dante, *Inferno*, v, 121-123.

Yearning for the large excitement that the  
coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his  
father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near  
and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like  
a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone be-  
fore him then, 115  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the  
throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever  
reaping something new;  
That which they have done but earnest of the  
things that they shall do.

For I dipped into the future, far as human  
eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the won-  
der that would be; 120

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies  
of magic sails,  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down  
with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there  
rained a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the  
central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-  
wind rushing warm, 125  
With the standards of the peoples plunging  
through the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and  
the battle-flags were furled  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of  
the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a  
fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped  
in universal law. 130

So I triumphed ere my passion sweeping  
through me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me  
with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here  
are out of joint.  
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping  
on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion,  
creeping nigher, 135  
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a  
slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increas-  
ing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widened with  
the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of  
his youthful joys,  
Though the deep heart of existence beat for  
ever like a boy's? 140

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I  
linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is  
more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and  
he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward the  
stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding  
on the bugle-horn, 145  
They to whom my foolish passion were a  
target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a  
moldered string?  
I am shamed through all my nature to have  
loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's  
pleasure, woman's pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded  
in a shallower brain. 150

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions,  
matched with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water  
unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing.  
Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life  
began to beat,

Where in wild Mahratta-battle<sup>1</sup> fell my father  
evil-starred;— 155  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish  
uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander  
far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways  
of the day.

<sup>1</sup>The Mahrattas are a Hindu people.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons  
and happy skies,  
Breaddths of tropic shade and palms in cluster,  
knots of Paradise. 160

Never comes the trader, never floats an Euro-  
pean flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings  
the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs the  
heavy-fruited tree—  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple  
spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more  
than in this march of mind, 165  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the  
thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramped no longer shall  
have scope and breathing space;  
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear  
my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive,  
and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their  
lances in the sun; 170

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the  
rainbows of the brooks,  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over mis-  
erable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know*  
my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the  
Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our  
glorious gains, 175  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast  
with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me  
were sun or clime?  
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files  
of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish  
one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like  
Joshua's moon in Ajalon!<sup>1</sup> 180

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward,  
forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down the  
ringing grooves of change.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See Joshua, x, 12-13.

<sup>2</sup>Tennyson explained that when he rode on the first train from Liverpool to Manchester in 1830 he supposed that the wheels ran in grooves, and so used the word in this line.

Through the shadow of the globe we sweep  
into the younger day;  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of  
Cathay.<sup>3</sup>

Mother-Age,—for mine I knew not,—help  
me as when life begun; 185  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the  
lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath  
not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well through all  
my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to  
Locksley Hall!  
Now for me the woods may wither, now for  
me the roof-tree fall. 190

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening  
over heath andholt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast  
a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail  
or fire or snow;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward,  
and I go.

#### SIR GALAHAD<sup>4</sup>

My GOOD blade carves the casques<sup>5</sup> of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.  
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high, 5  
The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,  
The horse and rider reel;  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And when the tide of combat stands, 10  
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favors fall!  
For them I battle till the end, 15  
To save from shame and thrall;  
But all my heart is drawn above,  
My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine;  
I never felt the kiss of love,  
Nor maiden's hand in mine. 20

<sup>3</sup>China.

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1842. The story of Sir Galahad is told by Malory in the *Morie d'Arthur*, Bks. XI-XVII (other matters are also treated in some of these books), and by Tennyson in *The Holy Grail*.

<sup>5</sup>Helmets.



More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
 Me mightier transports move and thrill;  
 So keep I fair through faith and prayer  
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,<sup>1</sup> 25  
 A light before me swims,  
 Between dark stems the forest glows,  
 I hear a noise of hymns.  
 Then by some secret shrine I ride;  
 I hear a voice, but none are there; 30  
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
 The tapers burning fair.  
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings, 35  
 And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
 I find a magic bark.  
 I leap on board; no helmsman steers;  
 I float till all is dark. 40  
 A gentle sound, an awful light!  
 Three angels bear the Holy Grail;<sup>2</sup>  
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
 On sleeping wings they sail.  
 Ah, blessed vision! blood of God! 45  
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
 As down dark tides the glory slides,  
 And starlike mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
 Through dreaming towns I go, 50  
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
 The streets are dumb with snow.  
 The tempest crackles on the leads,<sup>3</sup>  
 And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;  
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads, 55  
 And gilds the driving hail.  
 I leave the plain, I climb the height;  
 No branchy thicket shelter yields;  
 But blessed forms in whistling storms  
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields. 60

A maiden knight—to me is given  
 Such hope, I know not fear;  
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
 That often meet me here.  
 I muse on joy that will not cease, 65  
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
 Whose odors haunt my dreams;  
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
 This mortal armor that I wear, 70

This weight and size, this heart and eyes,  
 And touched, are turned to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
 And through the mountain-walls  
 A rolling organ-harmony 75  
 Swells up and shakes and falls.  
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:  
 "O just and faithful knight of God!  
 Ride on! the prize is near." 80  
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;  
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
 All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,  
 Until I find the Holy Grail.

### BREAK, BREAK, BREAK<sup>4</sup>

BREAK, break, break,  
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
 And I would that my tongue could utter  
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy, 5  
 That he shouts with his sister at play!  
 O well for the sailor lad,  
 That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
 To their haven under the hill; 10  
 But O for the touch of a vanished hand,  
 And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,  
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead 15  
 Will never come back to me.

### SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS<sup>5</sup>

#### I

THE splendor falls on castle walls  
 And snowy summits old in story;  
 The long light shakes across the lakes,  
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying, 5  
 Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,  
 dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,  
 And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing! 10

<sup>1</sup>When the crescent moon sets in clouds.

<sup>2</sup>The vessel in which Christ's blood was caught as he hung upon the cross. It was said to have been brought to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea, and it became an object of search among Arthur's knights. It could only be found, however, by the pure in heart and Galahad alone beheld it.

<sup>3</sup>On the roofs, covered with lead.

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1842. One of Tennyson's first attempts to express his grief over the death of A. H. Hallam.

<sup>5</sup>Published in 1847. The first of these songs was, however, added in 1848, and the third in 1850.

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,  
dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul, 15  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,  
dying.

## II

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they  
mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more. 5

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the under-  
world,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more. 10

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer  
dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering  
square; 14  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned  
On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret,  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more! 20

## III

HOME they brought her warrior dead;  
She nor swooned nor uttered cry.  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low, 5  
Called him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stepped, 10  
Took the face-cloth from the face;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears— 15  
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.<sup>1</sup>

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace  
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade; 5  
Thou madest Life in man and brute;  
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot  
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1850. The poems were gradually written in the period between the death of Arthur Henry Hallam on 15 September, 1833, and the date of publication. At the time of his death Hallam was engaged to Tennyson's sister Emily. His body was brought to England by sea (he had died in Vienna) and was buried at Clevedon, on the Bristol Channel, on 3 January, 1834. Clevedon Court was the residence of Hallam's maternal grandfather. Tennyson says: "It must be remembered that this is a poem, *not* an actual biography. . . . The different moods of sorrow as in a drama are dramatically given, and my conviction that fear, doubts, and suffering will find answer and relief only through Faith in a God of Love. 'T' is not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him." Tennyson also says: "The sections were written at many different places, and as the phases of our intercourse came to my memory and suggested them. I did not write them with any view of weaving them into a whole, or for publication, until I found that I had written so many." This circumstance of the poem's composition has given room for differences of opinion concerning the period of time covered in it. Some, imagining that Tennyson wrote, as it were, an historical record of his grief, and connecting allusions in the sections with actual happenings, hold that the period covered by the poem is 1833-1842. More probably, however, the internal chronology of the poem is independent of the actual order of events, and the period of time covered is not quite three years. The following table indicates the chronology, the Christmas sections marking the major divisions of the poem:

Section XI,	Early Autumn, 1833.
xv,	Later Autumn.
xxviii-xxx,	Christmas, 1833.
xxxviii-xxxix,	Spring.
lxxii,	First Anniversary, September, 1834.
lxxviii,	Christmas, 1834.
lxxxiii,	Delaying Spring.
lxxxvi,	
lxxxviii,	Spring.
lxxxix, xcv,	
xcviii,	Summer.
xcix,	Second Anniversary.
civ, cv	Christmas, 1835.
cvi,	New Year's Day.
cvi,	Winter.
cxv, cxvi,	Spring.

Tennyson sometimes referred to *In Memoriam* as "The Way of the Soul"; it is "a journey from the first stupor and confusion of grief, through a growing acquiescence often disturbed by the recurrence of pain, to an almost unclouded peace and joy. The anguish of wounded love passes into the triumph of love over sorrow, time, and death. The soul, at first, almost sunk in the feeling of loss, finds itself at last freed from regret and yet strengthened in affection. It pines no longer for the vanished hand and silent voice; it is filled with the consciousness of union with the spirit. The world, which once seemed to it a mere echo of its sorrow, has become the abode of that immortal Love, at once divine and human, which includes the living and the dead" (A. C. Bradley, *Commentary*, p. 27, from which the above Table has also been adapted).

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:  
 Thou madest man, he knows not why, 10  
 He thinks he was not made to die;  
 And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,  
 The highest, holiest, manhood, thou. 15  
 Our wills are ours, we know not how;  
 Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;  
 They have their day and cease to be;  
 They are but broken lights of thee, 20  
 And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,  
 For knowledge is of things we see;  
 And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
 A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more, 25  
 But more of reverence in us dwell;  
 That mind and soul, according well,  
 May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;  
 We mock thee when we do not fear: 30  
 But help thy foolish ones to bear;  
 Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me,  
 What seemed my worth since I began;  
 For merit lives from man to man, 35  
 And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,  
 Thy creature, whom I found so fair.  
 I trust he lives in thee, and there 40  
 I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,  
 Confusions of a wasted youth;  
 Forgive them where they fail in truth,  
 And in thy wisdom make me wise.

## I

I held it truth, with him<sup>1</sup> who sings  
 To one clear harp in divers tones,  
 That men may rise on stepping-stones  
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years 5  
 And find in loss a gain to match?  
 Or reach a hand through time to catch  
 The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,  
 Let darkness keep her raven gloss. 10  
 Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,  
 To dance with Death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn  
 The long result of love, and boast,  
 "Behold the man that loved and lost, 15  
 But all he was is overworn."

## II

Old yew, which graspest at the stones  
 That name the underlying dead,  
 Thy fibers net the dreamless head,  
 Thy roots are wrapped about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again, 5  
 And bring the firstling to the flock;  
 And in the dusk of thee the clock  
 Beats out the little lives of men.

O, not for thee the glow, the bloom,  
 Who changest not in any gale, 10  
 Nor branding summer suns avail  
 To touch thy thousand years of gloom;

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,  
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,  
 I seem to fail from out my blood 15  
 And grow incorporate into thee.

## III

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,  
 O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
 O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
 What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run; 5  
 A web is woven across the sky;  
 From out waste places comes a cry,  
 And murmurs from the dying sun;

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands— 10  
 With all the music in her tone,  
 A hollow echo of my own,—  
 A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
 Embrace her as my natural good;  
 Or crush her, like a vice of blood, 15  
 Upon the threshold of the mind?

## IV

To Sleep I give my powers away;  
 My will is bondsman to the dark;  
 I sit within a helmless bark,  
 And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now, 5  
 That thou shouldst fail from thy desire,  
 Who scarcely darest to inquire,  
 "What is it makes me beat so low?"

<sup>1</sup>Tennyson thought, in 1880, that his allusion was to Goethe.



Something it is which thou hast lost,  
 Some pleasure from thine early years. 10  
 Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,  
 That grief hath shaken into frost!

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross  
 All night below the darkened eyes;  
 With morning wakes the will, and cries, 15  
 "Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

## V

I sometimes hold it half a sin  
 To put in words the grief I feel;  
 For words, like Nature, half reveal  
 And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain, 5  
 A use in measured language lies;  
 The sad mechanic exercise,  
 Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,  
 Like coarsest clothes against the cold; 10  
 But that large grief which these enfold  
 Is given in outline and no more.

## VI

One writes, that "other friends remain,"  
 That "loss is common to the race"—  
 And common is the commonplace,  
 And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make 5  
 My own less bitter, rather more.  
 Too common! Never morning wore  
 To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
 Who pledgedst now thy gallant son, 10  
 A shot, ere half thy draught-be done,  
 Hath stilled the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save  
 Thy sailor,—while thy head is bowed,  
 His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud 15  
 Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
 At that last hour to please him well;  
 Who mused on all I had to tell, 19  
 And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home;  
 And ever met him on his way  
 With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"  
 Or "here to-morrow will he come."

O, somewhere, meek, unconscious dove, 25  
 That sittest ranging golden hair;

And glad to find thyself so fair,  
 Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows  
 In expectation of a guest;  
 And thinking "this will please him best," 30  
 She takes a riband or a rose:

For he will see them on to-night;  
 And with the thought her color burns;  
 And, having left the glass, she turns 35  
 Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turned, the curse  
 Had fallen, and her future lord  
 Was drowned in passing through the ford,  
 Or killed in falling from his horse. 40

O, what to her shall be the end?  
 And what to me remains of good?  
 To her perpetual maidenhood,  
 And unto me no second friend.

## VII

Dark house,<sup>1</sup> by which once more I stand  
 Here in the long unlovely street,  
 Doors, where my heart was used to beat  
 So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasped no more— 5  
 Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
 And like a guilty thing I creep  
 At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away  
 The noise of life begins again, 10  
 And ghastly through the drizzling rain  
 On the bald street breaks the blank day.

## VIII

A happy lover who has come  
 To look on her that loves him well,  
 Who 'lights and rings the gateway bell,  
 And learns her gone and far from home;

He saddens, all the magic light 5  
 Dies off at once from bower and hall,  
 And all the place is dark, and all  
 The chambers emptied of delight:

So find I every pleasant spot  
 In which we two were wont to meet, 10  
 The field, the chamber, and the street,  
 For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there  
 In those deserted walks, may find  
 A flower beat with rain and wind, 15  
 Which once she fostered up with care;

<sup>1</sup>In which Hallam lived, in London.

So seems it in my deep regret,  
 O my forsaken heart, with thee  
 And this poor flower of poesy  
 Which, little cared for, fades not yet. 20

But since it pleased a vanished eye,  
 I go to plant it on his tomb,  
 That if it can it there may bloom,  
 Or, dying, there at least may die.

## IX

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore<sup>1</sup>  
 Sailest the placid ocean-plains  
 With my lost Arthur's loved remains,  
 Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn 5  
 In vain; a favorable speed  
 Ruffle thy mirrored mast, and lead  
 Through prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex  
 Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor;<sup>2</sup> bright 10  
 As our pure love, through early light  
 Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above;  
 Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow;  
 Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now, 15  
 My friend, the brother of my love;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see  
 Till all my widowed race be run;  
 Dear as the mother to the son,  
 More than my brothers are to me. 20

## X

I hear the noise about thy keel;  
 I hear the bell struck in the night;  
 I see the cabin-window bright;  
 I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife, 5  
 And traveled men from foreign lands;  
 And letters unto trembling hands;  
 And, thy dark freight, a vanished life.

So bring him; we have idle dreams;  
 This look of quiet flatters thus 10  
 Our home-bred fancies. O, to us,  
 The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,  
 That takes the sunshine and the rains,  
 Or where the kneeling hamlet drains 15  
 The chalice of the grapes of God;

Than if with thee the roaring wells  
 Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine,  
 And hands so often clasped in mine,  
 Should toss with tangle and with shells. 20

## XI

Calm is the morn without a sound,  
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief,  
 And only through the faded leaf  
 The chestnut pattering to the ground;

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,<sup>3</sup> 5  
 And on these dews that drench the furze,  
 And all the silvery gossamers  
 That twinkle into green and gold;

Calm and still light on yon great plain  
 That sweeps with all its autumn bowers, 10  
 And crowded farms and lessening towers,  
 To mingle with the bounding main;<sup>4</sup>

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,  
 These leaves that redden to the fall,  
 And in my heart, if calm at all, 15  
 If any calm, a calm despair;

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
 And waves that sway themselves in rest,  
 And dead calm in that noble breast  
 Which heaves but with the heaving deep. 20

## XII

Lo, as a dove when up she springs  
 To bear through heaven a tale of woe,  
 Some dolorous message knit below  
 The wild pulsation of her wings;

Like her I go, I cannot stay; 5  
 I leave this mortal ark behind,  
 A weight of nerves without a mind,  
 And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,  
 And reach the glow of southern skies, 10  
 And see the sails at distance rise,  
 And linger weeping on the marge,

And saying, "Comes he thus, my friend?  
 Is this the end of all my care?"  
 And circle moaning in the air, 15  
 "Is this the end? Is this the end?"

And forward dart again, and play  
 About the prow, and back return  
 To where the body sits, and learn  
 That I have been an hour away. 20

<sup>1</sup>Hallam's body was brought to England by sea, from Trieste.

<sup>2</sup>The morning star.

<sup>3</sup>Open country.

<sup>4</sup>Limiting sea.

## XIII

Tears of the widower, when he sees  
 A late-lost form that sleep reveals,  
 And moves his doubtful arms, and feels  
 Her place is empty, fall like these;

Which weep a loss for ever new, 5  
 A void where heart on heart reposed;  
 And, where warm hands have pressed and  
 closed,  
 Silence, till I be silent too;

Which weep the comrade of my choice, 10  
 An awful thought, a life removed,  
 The human-hearted man I loved,  
 A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come, Time, and teach me, many years,  
 I do not suffer in a dream;  
 For now so strange do these things seem, 15  
 Mine eyes have leisure for their tears,

My fancies time to rise on wing,  
 And glance about the approaching sails,  
 As though they brought but merchants'  
 bales,  
 And not the burthen that they bring. 20

## XIV

If one should bring me this report,  
 That thou hadst touched the land to-day,  
 And I went down unto the quay,  
 And found thee lying in the port;

And standing, muffled round with woe, 5  
 Should see thy passengers in rank  
 Come stepping lightly down the plank,  
 And beckoning unto those they know;

And if along with these should come 10  
 The man I held as half-divine,  
 Should strike a sudden hand in mine,  
 And ask a thousand things of home;

And I should tell him all my pain,  
 And how my life had drooped of late,  
 And he should sorrow o'er my state 15  
 And marvel what possessed my brain;

And I perceived no touch of change,  
 No hint of death in all his frame,  
 But found him all in all the same, 20  
 I should not feel it to be strange.

## XV

To-night the winds begin to rise  
 And roar from yonder dropping day;  
 The last red leaf is whirled away,  
 The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest cracked, the waters curled, 5  
 The cattle huddled on the lea;  
 And wildly dash'd on tower and tree  
 The sunbeam strikes along the world:

And but for fancies, which aver  
 That all thy motions gently pass 10  
 Athwart a plane of molten glass,<sup>1</sup>  
 I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud;  
 And but for fear it is not so,  
 The wild unrest that lives in woe 15  
 Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,  
 And onward drags a laboring breast,  
 And topples round the dreary west,  
 A looming bastion fringed with fire. 20

## XVI

What words are these have fallen from me?  
 Can calm despair and wild unrest  
 Be tenants of a single breast,  
 Or Sorrow such a changeling be?

Or doth she only seem to take 5  
 The touch of change in calm or storm,  
 But knows no more of transient form  
 In her deep self, than some dead lake

That holds the shadow of a lark 10  
 Hung in the shadow of a heaven?  
 Or has the shock, so harshly given,  
 Confused me like the unhappy bark

That strikes by night a craggy shelf,  
 And staggers blindly ere she sink?  
 And stunned me from my power to think 15  
 And all my knowledge of myself;

And made me that delirious man  
 Whose fancy fuses old and new,  
 And flashes into false and true,  
 And mingles all without a plan? 20

## XVII

Thou comest, much wept for; such a breeze  
 Compelled thy canvas, and my prayer  
 Was as the whisper of an air  
 To breathe thee over lonely seas.

For I in spirit saw thee move 5  
 Through circles of the bounding sky,  
 Week after week; the days go by;  
 Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

<sup>1</sup>Across a calm sea.



Henceforth, wherever thou mayst roam,  
 My blessing, like a line of light,  
 Is on the waters day and night,  
 And like a beaçon guards thee home.

10

So may whatever tempest mars  
 Mid-ocean spare thee, sacred bark,  
 And balmy drops in summer dark  
 Slide from the bosom of the stars;

15

So kind an office hath been done,  
 Such precious relics brought by thee,  
 The dust of him I shall not see  
 Till all my widowed race be run.

20

## XVIII

'Tis well; 'tis something; we may stand  
 Where he in English earth is laid,  
 And from his ashes may be made  
 The violet of his native land.

'Tis little; but it looks in truth  
 As if the quiet bones were blest  
 Among familiar names to rest  
 And in the places of his youth.

5

Come then, pure hands, and bear the head  
 That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,  
 And come, whatever loves to weep,  
 And hear the ritual of the dead.

10

Ah yet, even yet, if this might be,  
 I, falling on his faithful heart,  
 Would breathing through his lips impart  
 The life that almost dies in me;

15

That dies not, but endures with pain,  
 And slowly forms the firmer mind,  
 Treasuring the look it cannot find,  
 The words that are not heard again.

20

## XIX

The Danube to the Severn gave  
 The darkened heart that beat no more;  
 They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
 And in the hearing of the wave.<sup>1</sup>

There twice a day the Severn fills;  
 The salt sea-water passes by,  
 And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
 And makes a silence in the hills.

5

The Wye is hushed nor moved along,  
 And hushed my deepest grief of all,  
 When filled with tears that cannot fall,  
 I brim with sorrow drowning song.

10

The tide flows down, the wave again  
 Is vocal in its wooded walls;  
 My deeper anguish also falls,  
 And I can speak a little then.

15

## XX

The lesser griefs that may be said,  
 That breathe a thousand tender vows,  
 Are but as servants in a house  
 Where lies the master newly dead;

Who speak their feeling as it is,  
 And weep the fullness from the mind.  
 "It will be hard," they say, "to find  
 Another service such as this."

5

My lighter moods are like to these,  
 That out of words a comfort win;  
 But there are other griefs within,  
 And tears that at their fountain freeze;

10

For by the hearth the children sit  
 Cold in that atmosphere of death,  
 And scarce endure to draw the breath,  
 Or like to noiseless phantoms flit;

15

But open converse is there none,  
 So much the vital spirits sink  
 To see the vacant chair, and think,  
 "How good! how kind! and he is gone."

20

## XXI

I sing to him that rests below,  
 And, since the grasses round me wave,  
 I take the grasses of the grave,  
 And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveler hears me now and then,  
 And sometimes harshly will he speak:  
 "This fellow would make weakness weak,  
 And melt the waxen hearts of men."

5

Another answers: "Let him be,  
 He loves to make parade of pain,  
 That with his piping he may gain  
 The praise that comes to constancy."

10

A third is wroth: "Is this an hour  
 For private sorrow's barren song,  
 When more and more the people throng  
 The chairs and thrones of civil power?"

15

"A time to sicken and to swoon,  
 When Science reaches forth her arms  
 To feel from world to world, and charms  
 Her secret from the latest moon?"

20

Behold, ye speak an idle thing;  
 Ye never knew the sacred dust.  
 I do but sing because I must,  
 And pipe but as the linnets sing;

<sup>1</sup>Clevedon Churchyard is near the point where the Severn River flows into Bristol Channel.

And one is glad; her note is gay, 25  
 For now her little ones have ranged;  
 And one is sad; her note is changed,  
 Because her brood is stolen away.

## XXII

The path by which we twain did go,  
 Which led by tracts that pleased us well,  
 Through four sweet years arose and fell,  
 From flower to flower, from snow to snow;

And we with singing cheered the way, 5  
 And, crowned with all the season lent,  
 From April on to April went,  
 And glad at heart from May to May.

But where the path we walked began  
 To slant the fifth autumnal slope, 10  
 As we descended following Hope,  
 There sat the Shadow feared of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,  
 And spread his mantle dark and cold,  
 And wrapped thee formless in the fold, 15  
 And dulled the murmur on thy lip,

And bore thee where I could not see  
 Nor follow, though I walk in haste,  
 And think that somewhere in the waste  
 The Shadow sits and waits for me. 20

## XXIII

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
 Or breaking into song by fits,  
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
 The Shadow cloaked from head to foot,<sup>1</sup>

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds, 5  
 I wander, often falling lame,  
 And looking back to whence I came,  
 Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying, How changed from where it ran  
 Through lands where not a leaf was dumb,  
 But all the lavish hills would hum 11  
 The murmur of a happy Pan;

When each by turns was guide to each,  
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,  
 And Thought leapt out to wed with Thought  
 Ere Thought could wed itself with Speech, 16

And all we met was fair and good,  
 And all was good that Time could bring,  
 And all the secret of the Spring  
 Moved in the chambers of the blood; 20

<sup>1</sup>Death.

And many an old philosophy  
 On Argive heights divinely sang,  
 And round us all the thicket rang  
 To many a flute of Arcady.<sup>2</sup>

## XXIV

And was the day of my delight  
 As pure and perfect as I say?  
 The very source and fount of day  
 Is dashed with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met, 5  
 This earth had been the Paradise  
 It never looked to human eyes  
 Since our first sun arose and set.

And is it that the haze of grief  
 Makes former gladness loom so great? 10  
 The lowness of the present state,  
 That sets the past in this relief?

Or that the past will always win  
 A glory from its being far,  
 And orb into the perfect star 15  
 We saw not when we moved therein?

## XXV

I know that this was Life,—the track  
 Whereon with equal feet we fared;  
 And then, as now, the day prepared  
 The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move 5  
 As light as carrier-birds in air;  
 I loved the weight I had to bear,  
 Because it needed help of Love;

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,  
 When mighty Love would cleave in twain 20  
 The lading of a single pain,  
 And part it, giving half to him.

## XXVI

Still onward winds the dreary way;  
 I with it, for I long to prove  
 No lapse of moons can canker Love,  
 Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt 5  
 And goodness, and hath power to see  
 Within the green the moldered tree,  
 And towers fallen as soon as built—

O, if indeed that eye foresee 10  
 Or see—in Him is no before—  
 In more of life true life no more  
 And Love the indifference to be,

<sup>2</sup>The allusion is to Greek philosophy and poetry.

Then might I find, ere yet the morn  
Breaks hither over Indian seas,  
That Shadow waiting with the keys, 15  
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

## XXVII

I envy not in any moods  
The captive void of noble rage,  
The linnet born within the cage,  
That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes 5  
His license in the field of time,  
Unfettered by the sense of crime,  
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,  
The heart that never plighted troth 10  
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;  
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;  
I feel it, when I sorrow most;  
'Tis better to have loved and lost 15  
Than never to have loved at all.

## XXVIII

The time draws near the birth of Christ.  
The moon is hid, the night is still;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round, 5  
From far and near, on mead and moor,  
Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound;

Each voice four changes on the wind, 10  
That now dilate, and now decrease,  
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,  
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wished no more to wake,  
And that my hold on life would break 15  
Before I heard those bells again;

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controlled me when a boy;  
They bring me sorrow touched with joy,  
The merry, merry bells of Yule. 20

## XXIX

With such compelling cause to grieve  
As daily vexes household peace,  
And chains regret to his decease,  
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve,

Which brings no more a welcome guest 5  
To enrich the threshold of the night  
With showered largess of delight  
In dance and song and game and jest?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs  
Entwine the cold baptismal font, 10  
Make one wreath more for Use and Wont,  
That guard the portals of the house;

Old sisters of a day gone by,  
Gray nurses, loving nothing new—  
Why should they miss their yearly due 15  
Before their time? They too will die.

## XXX

With trembling fingers did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas hearth;  
A rainy cloud possessed the earth,  
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall 5  
We gamboled, making vain pretense  
Of gladness, with an awful sense  
Of one mute Shadow watching all. 15

We paused: the winds were in the beech;  
We heard them sweep the winter land; 10  
And in a circle hand-in-hand  
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;  
We sung, though every eye was dim,  
A merry song we sang with him 15  
Last year; impetuously we sang.

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us: surely rest is meet.  
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is sweet," 20  
And silence followed, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;  
Once more we sang: "They do not die  
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail 25  
With gathered power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,  
Draw forth the cheerful day from night: 30  
O Father, touch the east, and light  
The light that shone when Hope was born.

## XXXI

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,  
And home to Mary's house returned,  
Was this demanded—if he yearned  
To hear her weeping by his grave?



"Where wert thou, brother, those four days?"  
 There lives no record of reply, 6  
 Which telling what it is to die  
 Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,  
 The streets were filled with joyful sound, 10  
 A solemn gladness even crowned  
 The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!  
 The rest remaineth unrevealed;  
 He told it not, or something sealed 15  
 The lips of that Evangelist.<sup>1</sup>

## XXXII

Her eyes<sup>2</sup> are homes of silent prayer,  
 Nor other thought her mind admits  
 But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
 And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede 5  
 All other, when her ardent gaze  
 Roves from the living brother's face,  
 And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
 Borne down by gladness so complete, 10  
 She bows, she bathes the Savior's feet  
 With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,  
 Whose loves in higher love endure;  
 What souls possess themselves so pure, 15  
 Or is there blessedness like theirs?

## XXXIII

O thou that after toil and storm  
 Mayst seem to have reached a purer air,  
 Whose faith has center everywhere,  
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister when she prays 5  
 Her early heaven, her happy views;  
 Nor thou with shadowed hint confuse  
 A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith through form is pure as thine,  
 Her hands are quicker unto good. 10  
 O, sacred be the flesh and blood  
 To which she links a truth divine!

See thou, that countest reason ripe  
 In holding by the law within,  
 Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
 And even for want of such a type.

<sup>1</sup>St. John (xi, 1-44).

<sup>2</sup>The eyes of Mary, the sister of Lazarus.

## XXXIV

My own dim life should teach me this,  
 That life shall live for evermore,  
 Else earth is darkness at the core,  
 And dust and ashes all that is;

This round of green, this orb of flame, 5  
 Fantastic beauty; such as lurks  
 In some wild poet, when he works  
 Without a conscience or an aim.

What then were God to such as I?  
 'Twere hardly worth my while to choose 10  
 Of things all mortal, or to use  
 A little patience ere I die;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,  
 Like birds the charming serpent draws  
 To drop head-foremost in the jaws 15  
 Of vacant darkness and to cease.

## XXXV

Yet if some voice that man could trust  
 Should murmur from the narrow house,  
 "The cheeks drop in, the body bows;  
 Man dies, nor is there hope in dust;"

Might I not say? "Yet even here, 5  
 But for one hour, O Love, I strive  
 To keep so sweet a thing alive."  
 But I should turn mine ears and hear

The moanings of the homeless sea,  
 The sound of streams that swift or slow 10  
 Draw down Æonian hills, and sow  
 The dust of continents to be;

And Love would answer with a sigh,  
 "The sound of that forgetful shore  
 Will change my sweetness more and more, 15  
 Half-dead to know that I shall die."

O me, what profits it to put  
 An idle case? If Death were seen  
 At first as Death, Love had not been,  
 Or been in narrowest working shut, 20

Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,  
 Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape  
 Had bruised the herb and crushed the grape,  
 And basked and battened in the woods.

## XXXVI

Though truths in manhood darkly join, 15  
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
 We yield all blessing to the name  
 Of Him that made them current coin;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers, 5  
Where truth in closest words shall fail,  
When truth embodied in a tale  
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought  
With human hands the creed of creeds 10  
In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
More strong than all poetic thought;

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,  
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,  
And those wild eyes that watch the wave 15  
In roarings round the coral reef.

## XXXVII

Urania<sup>1</sup> speaks with darkened brow:  
"Thou pratest here where thou art least;  
This faith has many a purer priest,  
And many an abler voice than thou.

"Go down beside thy native rill, 5  
On thy Parnassus<sup>2</sup> set thy feet,  
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet  
About the ledges of the hill."

And my Melpomene<sup>3</sup> replies,  
A touch of shame upon her cheek: 10  
"I am not worthy even to speak  
Of thy prevailing mysteries;

"For I am but an earthly Muse,  
And owning but a little art  
To lull with song an aching heart, 15  
And render human love his dues;

"But brooding on the dear one dead,  
And all he said of things divine,—  
And dear to me as sacred wine  
To dying lips is all he said,— 20

"I murmured, as I came along,  
Of comfort clasped in truth revealed,  
And loitered in the master's field,  
And darkened sanctities with song."

## XXXVIII

With weary steps I loiter on,  
Though always under altered skies  
The purple from the distance dies,  
My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives, 5  
The herald melodies of spring,

<sup>1</sup>The heavenly muse, who reproves the poet for touching on revealed truth.

<sup>2</sup>The hill sacred to Apollo and the muses. The laurel, with which poets were crowned, grows on its slopes.

<sup>3</sup>Muse of tragedy, in this instance of elegy.

But in the songs I love to sing  
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here  
Survive in spirits rendered free, 10  
Then are these songs I sing of thee  
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

## XXXIX

Old warder of these buried bones,  
And answering now my random stroke  
With fruitful cloud and living smoke,  
Dark yew, that graspest at the stones

And dippest toward the dreamless head, 5  
To thee too comes the golden hour  
When flower is feeling after flower;  
But Sorrow,—fixed upon the dead,

And darkening the dark graves of men,—  
What whispered from her lying lips? 10  
Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,  
And passes into gloom again.

## XL

Could we forget the widowed hour  
And look on Spirits breathed away,  
As on a maiden in the day  
When first she wears her orange-flower!

When crowned with blessing she doth rise 5  
To take her latest leave of home,  
And hopes and light regrets that come  
Make April of her tender eyes;

And doubtful joys the father move,  
And tears are on the mother's face, 10  
As parting with a long embrace  
She enters other realms of love;

Her office there to rear, to teach,  
Becoming as is meet and fit  
A link among the days, to knit 15  
The generations each with each;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given  
A life that bears immortal fruit  
In those great offices that suit  
The full-grown energies of heaven. 20

Ay me, the difference I discern!  
How often shall her old fireside  
Be cheered with tidings of the bride,  
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told, 25  
And bring her babe, and make her boast,  
Till even those that missed her most  
Shall count new things as dear as old;

But thou and I have shaken hands,  
 Till growing winters lay me low; 30  
 My paths are in the fields I know,  
 And thine in undiscovered lands.

## XLI

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss  
 Did ever rise from high to higher,  
 As mounts the heavenward altar-fire,  
 As flies the lighter through the gross.

But thou art turned to something strange, 5  
 And I have lost the links that bound  
 Thy changes; here upon the ground,  
 No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly! yet that this could be—  
 That I could wing my will with might 10  
 To leap the grades of life and light,  
 And flash at once, my friend, to thee!

For though my nature rarely yields  
 To that vague fear implied in death,  
 Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath, 15  
 The howlings from forgotten fields;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor  
 An inner trouble I behold,  
 A spectral doubt which makes me cold,  
 That I shall be thy mate no more, 20

Though following with an upward mind  
 The wonders that have come to thee,  
 Through all the secular to-be,<sup>1</sup>  
 But ever more a life behind.

## XLII

I vex my heart with fancies dim.  
 He still outstripped me in the race;  
 It was but unity of place  
 That made me dream I ranked with him.

And so may Place retain us still, 5  
 And he the much-beloved again,  
 A lord of large experience, train  
 To riper growth the mind and will;

And what delights can equal those  
 That stir the spirit's inner deeps, 10  
 When one that loves, but knows not, reaps  
 A truth from one that loves and knows?

## XLIII

If Sleep and Death be truly one,  
 And every spirit's folded bloom  
 Through all its interval bloom  
 In some long trance should slumber on;

<sup>1</sup>Through all the ages of the future.

Unconscious of the sliding hour, 5  
 Bare of the body, might it last,  
 And silent traces of the past  
 Be all the color of the flower:

So then were nothing lost to man;  
 So that still garden of the souls 10  
 In many a figured leaf enrolls  
 The total world since life began;

And love will last as pure and whole  
 As when he loved me here in Time,  
 And at the spiritual prime<sup>2</sup> 15  
 Rewaken with the dawning soul.

## XLIV

How fares it with the happy dead?  
 For here the man is more and more;  
 But he forgets the days before  
 God shut the doorways of his head.<sup>3</sup>

The days have vanished, tone and tint, 5  
 And yet perhaps the hoarding sense  
 Gives out at times—he knows not whence—  
 A little flash, a mystic hint;

And in the long harmonious years—  
 If Death so taste Lethean springs— 10  
 May some dim touch of earthly things  
 Surprise thee ranging with thy peers.

If such a dreamy touch should fall,  
 O, turn thee round, resolve the doubt;  
 My guardian angel will speak out 15  
 In that high place, and tell thee all.

## XLV

The baby new to earth and sky,  
 What time his tender palm is pressed  
 Against the circle of the breast,  
 Has never thought that "this is I";

But as he grows he gathers much, 5  
 And learns the use of "I" and "me,"  
 And finds "I am not what I see,  
 And other than the things I touch"

So rounds he to a separate mind  
 From whence clear memory may begin, 10  
 As through the frame that binds him in  
 His isolation grows defined.

<sup>2</sup>Dawn.

<sup>3</sup>The dead after this life may have no remembrance of life, like the living babe who forgets the time before the sutures of the skull are closed; yet the living babe grows in knowledge, and though the remembrance of his earliest days has vanished, yet with his increasing knowledge there comes a dreamy vision of what has been; it may be so with the dead; if so, resolve my doubts, etc. (Tennyson's note.) The notion that Brahma enters the body through one of the sutures of the skull is found in the *Upanishads*, and Tennyson may have known this.



This use may lie in blood and breath,  
Which else were fruitless of their due,  
Had man to learn himself anew 15  
Beyond the second birth of death.

## XLVI

We ranging down this lower track,  
The path we came by, thorn and flower,  
Is shadowed by the growing hour,  
Lest life should fail in looking back.

So be it: there no shade can last 5  
In that deep dawn behind the tomb,  
But clear from marge to marge shall bloom  
The eternal landscape of the past;

A lifelong tract of time revealed,  
The fruitful hours of still increase; 10  
Days ordered in a wealthy peace,  
And those five years its richest field.

O love, thy province were not large,  
A bounded field, nor stretching far;  
Look also, Love, a brooding star, 15  
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

## XLVII

That each, who seems a separate whole,  
Should move his rounds, and fusing all  
The skirts of self again, should fall  
Remerging in the general Soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet. 5  
Eternal form shall still divide  
The eternal soul from all beside;  
And I shall know him when we meet;

And we shall sit at endless feast,  
Enjoying each the other's good. 10  
What vaster dream can hit the mood  
Of Love on earth? He seeks at least

Upon the last and sharpest height,  
Before the spirits fade away,  
Some landing-place, to clasp and say, 15  
"Farewell! We lose ourselves in light."

## XLVIII

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,  
Were taken to be such as closed  
Grave doubts and answers here proposed,  
Then these were such as men might scorn.

Her care is not to part and prove; 5  
She takes, when harsher moods remit,  
What slender shade of doubt may flit,  
And makes it vassal unto love;

And hence, indeed, she sports with words,  
But better serves a wholesome law, 10  
And holds it sin and shame to draw  
The deepest measure from the chords;

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,  
But rather loosens from the lip  
Short swallow-flights of song, that dip 15  
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

## XLIX

From art, from nature, from the schools,  
Let random influences glance,  
Like light in many a shivered lance  
That breaks about the dappled pools.

The lightest wave of thought shall lisp, 5  
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,  
The slightest air of song shall breathe  
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,  
But blame not thou the winds that make 10  
The seeming-wanton ripple break,  
The tender-penciled shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears  
Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,  
Whose muffled motions blindly drown 15  
The bases of my life in tears.

## L

Be near me when my light is low,  
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick  
And tingle; and the heart is sick,  
And all the wheels of being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame 5  
Is racked with pangs that conquer trust;  
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,  
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,  
And men the flies of latter spring, 10  
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing  
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,  
To point the term of human strife,  
And on the low dark verge of life 15  
The twilight of eternal day.

## LI

Do we indeed desire the dead  
Should still be near us at our side?  
Is there no baseness we would hide?  
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,  
I had such reverence for his blame,  
See with clear eye some hidden shame  
And I be lessened in his love? 5

I wrong the grave with fears untrue.  
Shall love be blamed for want of faith? 10  
There must be wisdom with great Death;  
The dead shall look me through and through.

Be near us when we climb or fall;  
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours  
With larger other eyes than ours, 15  
To make allowance for us all.

## LII

I cannot love thee as I ought,  
For love reflects the thing beloved;  
My words are only words, and moved  
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song," 5  
The Spirit of true love replied;  
"Thou canst not move me from thy side,  
Nor human frailty do me wrong.

"What keeps a spirit wholly true  
To that ideal which he bears? 10  
What record? not the sinless years  
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue;<sup>1</sup>

"So fret not, like an idle girl,  
That life is dashed with flecks of sin.  
Abide; thy wealth is gathered in, 15  
When Time hath sundered shell from pearl."

## LIII

How many a father have I seen,  
A sober man, among his boys,  
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,  
Who wears his manhood hale and green;

And dare we to this fancy give,<sup>2</sup> 5  
That had the wild oat not been sown,  
The soil, left barren, scarce had grown  
The grain by which a man may live?

Or, if we held the doctrine sound  
For life outliving heats of youth, 10  
Yet who would preach it as a truth  
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou the good, define it well;  
For fear divine Philosophy  
Should push beyond her mark, and be 15  
Procureess to the Lords of Hell.

## LIV

O, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet; 5  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire 10  
Is shriveled in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all, 15  
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream; but what am I?  
An infant crying in the night;  
An infant crying for the light,  
And with no language but a cry. 20

## LV

The wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fail beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife, 5  
That Nature lends such evil dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere  
Her secret meaning in her deeds, 10  
And finding that of fifty seeds  
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of cares  
Upon the great world's altar-stairs 15  
That slope through darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope. 20

## LVI

"So careful of the type?" but no.  
From scarpéd cliff and quarried stone  
She cries, "A thousand types are gone;  
I care for nothing, all shall go.

<sup>1</sup>Not even the record of the life of Jesus.

<sup>2</sup>Yield.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:  
I bring to life, I bring to death;  
The spirit does but mean the breath:  
I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,  
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies,  
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed  
And love Creation's final law—  
Though Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shrieked against his creed—

Who loved, who suffered countless ills,  
Who battled for the True, the Just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or sealed within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,<sup>1</sup>  
That tare each other in their slime,  
Were mellow music matched with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!  
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!  
What hope of answer, or redress?  
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

## LVII

Peace; come away: the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song.  
Peace; come away: we do him wrong  
To sing so wildly: let us go.

Come; let us go: your cheeks are pale;  
But half my life I leave behind.  
Methinks my friend is richly shrined;  
But I shall pass, my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,  
One set slow bell will seem to toll  
The passing of the sweetest soul  
That ever looked with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,  
Eternal greetings to the dead;  
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,  
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

## LVIII

In those sad words I took farewell.  
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,  
As drop by drop the water falls  
In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

<sup>1</sup>Prehistoric monsters.

And, falling, idly broke the peace  
Of hearts that beat from day to day,  
Half-conscious of their dying clay,  
And those cold crypts where they shall cease.

The high Muse answered: "Wherefore grieve  
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?  
Abide a little longer here,  
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

## LIX

O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me  
No casual mistress, but a wife,  
My bosom-friend and half of life;  
As I confess it needs must be?

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,  
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,  
And put thy harsher moods aside,  
If thou wilt have me wise and good?

My centered passion cannot move,  
Nor will it lessen from to-day;  
But I'll have leave at times to play  
As with the creature of my love;

And set thee forth, for thou art mine,  
With so much hope for years to come,  
That, howsoe'er I know thee, some  
Could hardly tell what name were thine.

## LX

He passed, a soul of nobler tone;  
My spirit loved and loves him yet,  
Like some poor girl whose heart is set  
On one whose rank exceeds her own.

He mixing with his proper sphere,  
She finds the baseness of her lot,  
Half jealous of she knows not what,  
And envying all that meet him there.

The little village looks forlorn;  
She sighs amid her narrow days,  
Moving about the household ways,  
In that dark house where she was born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,  
And tease her till the day draws by;  
At night she weeps, "How vain am I!  
How should he love a thing so low?"

## LXI

If, in thy second state sublime,  
Thy ransomed reason change replied  
With all the circle of the wise,  
The perfect flower of human time;



And if thou cast thine eyes below, 5  
 How dimly characterized and slight,  
 How dwarfed a growth of cold and night,  
 How blanched with darkness must I grow!

Yet turn thee to the doubtful shore,  
 Where thy first form was made a man; 10  
 I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor can  
 The soul of Shakespeare love thee more.

## LXII

Though if an eye that's downward cast  
 Could make thee somewhat blench or fail,  
 Then be my love an idle tale  
 And fading legend of the past;

And thou, as one that once declined, 5  
 When he was little more than boy,  
 On some unworthy heart with joy,  
 But lives to wed an equal mind,

And breathes a novel world, the while 10  
 His other passion wholly dies,  
 Or in the light of deeper eyes  
 Is matter for a flying smile.

## LXIII

Yet pity, for a horse o'er-driven,  
 And love in which my hound has part,  
 Can hang no weight upon my heart  
 In its assumptions up to heaven;

And I am so much more than these, 5  
 As thou, perchance, art more than I,  
 And yet I spare them sympathy,  
 And I would set their pains at ease.

So mayst thou watch me where I weep, 10  
 As, unto vaster motions bound,  
 The circuits of thine orbit round  
 A higher height, a deeper deep.

## LXIV

Dost thou look back on what hath been,  
 As some divinely gifted man,  
 Whose life in low estate began  
 And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar, 5  
 And grasps the skirts of happy chance,  
 And breasts the blows of circumstance,  
 And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known 10  
 And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
 To mold a mighty state's decrees,  
 And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,  
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope

The pillar of a people's hope, 15  
 The center of a world's desire;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,  
 When all his active powers are still,  
 A distant dearness in the hill, 20  
 A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,  
 While yet beside its vocal springs  
 He played at counselors and kings,  
 With one that was his earliest mate;

Who plows with pain his native lea 25  
 And reaps the labor of his hands,  
 Or in the furrow musing stands:  
 "Does my old friend remember me?"

## LXV

Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt;  
 \* I lull a fancy trouble-tossed  
 With "Love's too precious to be lost  
 A little grain shall not be spilt."

And in that solace can I sing, 5  
 Till out of painful phases wrought  
 There flutters up a happy thought,  
 Self-balanced on a lightsome wing;

Since we deserved the name of friends, 10  
 And thine effect so lives in me,  
 A part of mine may live in thee  
 And move thee on to noble ends.

## LXVI

You thought my heart too far diseased;  
 You wonder when my fancies play  
 To find me gay among the gay,  
 Like one with any trifle pleased.

The shade by which my life was crossed, 5  
 Which makes a desert in the mind,  
 Has made me kindly with my kind,  
 And like to him whose sight is lost;

Whose feet are guided through the land, 10  
 Whose jest among his friends is free,  
 Who takes the children on his knee,  
 And winds their curls about his hand.

He plays with threads, he beats his chair 15  
 For pastime, dreaming of the sky;  
 His inner day can never die,  
 His night of loss is always there.

## LXVII

When on my bed the moonlight falls,  
 I know that in thy place of rest  
 By that broad water of the west  
 There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,  
 As slowly steals a silver flame  
 Along the letters of thy name,  
 And o'er the number of thy years.

5

The mystic glory swims away,  
 From off my bed the moonlight dies;  
 And closing eaves of wearied eyes  
 I sleep till dusk is dipped in gray;

10

And then I know the mist is drawn  
 A lucid veil from coast to coast,  
 And in the dark church like a ghost  
 Thy tablet glimmers in the dawn.

15

## LXVIII

When in the down I sink my head,  
 Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times my  
 breath;  
 Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows not  
 Death,  
 Nor can I dream of thee as dead.

my

I walk as ere I walked forlorn,  
 When all our path was fresh with dew,  
 And all the bugle breezes blew  
 Reveillée to the breaking morn.

5

But what is this? I turn about,  
 I find a trouble in thine eye,  
 Which makes me sad I know not why,  
 Nor can my dream resolve the doubt;

10

But ere the lark hath left the lea  
 I wake, and I discern the truth;  
 It is the trouble of my youth  
 That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

15

## LXIX

I dreamed there would be Spring no more,  
 That Nature's ancient power was lost;  
 The streets were black with smoke and frost,  
 They chattered trifles at the door;

I wandered from the noisy town,  
 I found a wood with thorny boughs;  
 I took the thorns to bind my brows,  
 I wore them like a civic crown;

5

I met with scoffs, I met with scorns  
 From youth and babe and hoary hairs: 10  
 They called me in the public squares  
 The fool that wears a crown of thorns.

10

They called me fool, they called me child:  
 I found an angel of the night;  
 The voice was low, the look was bright: 15  
 He looked upon my crown and smiled.

15

He reached the glory of a hand,  
 That seemed to touch it into leaf;  
 The voice was not the voice of grief,  
 The words were hard to understand.

20

## LXX

I cannot see the features right,  
 When on the gloom I strive to paint  
 The face I know; the hues are faint  
 And mix with hollow masks of night;

Cloud-towers by ghostly masons wrought,  
 A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,  
 A hand that points, and palled shapes  
 In shadowy thoroughfares of thought;

5

And crowds that stream from yawning doors,  
 And shoals of puckered faces drive;  
 Dark bulks that tumble half alive,  
 And lazy lengths on boundless shores:

10

Till all at once beyond the will  
 I hear a wizard music roll,  
 And through a lattice on the soul  
 Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

15

## LXXI

Sleep, kinsman thou to death and trance  
 And madness, thou hast forged at last  
 A night-long present of the past  
 In which we went through summer France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul?  
 Then bring an opiate trebly strong,  
 Drug down the blindfold sense of wrong,  
 That so my pleasure may be whole;

5

While now we talk as once we talked  
 Of men and minds, the dust of change,  
 The days that grow to something strange,  
 In walking as of old we walked

10

Beside the river's wooded reach,  
 The fortress, and the mountain ridge,  
 The cataract flashing from the bridge,  
 The breaker breaking on the beach.

15

## LXXII

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
 And howlest, issuing out of night,  
 With blasts that blow the poplar white,  
 And lash with storm the streaming pane?

Day, when my crowned estate begun  
 To pine in that reverse of doom,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which sickened every living bloom,  
 And blurred the splendor of the sun;

5

<sup>1</sup>In Hallam's death.

Who usherest in the dolorous hour  
 With thy quick tears that make the rose 10  
 Pull sideways, and the daisy close  
 Her crimson fringes to the shower;

Who mightst have heaved a windless flame  
 Up the deep East, or, whispering, played  
 A checker-work of beam and shade 15  
 Along the hills, yet looked the same,

As wan, as chill, as wild as now;  
 Day, marked as with some hideous crime,  
 When the dark hand struck down through  
 time,  
 And canceled nature's best: but thou, 20

Lift as thou mayst thy burthened brows  
 Through clouds that drench the morning  
 star,  
 And whirl the ungarnered sheaf afar,  
 And sow the sky with flying boughs,

And up thy vault with roaring sound 25  
 Climb thy thick moon, disastrous day;  
 Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,  
 And hide thy shame beneath the ground.

## LXXXIII

So many worlds, so much to do,  
 So little done, such things to be,  
 How know I what had need of thee,  
 For thou wert strong as thou wert true?

The fame is quenched that I foresaw, 5  
 The head hath missed an earthly wreath:  
 I curse not Nature, no, nor Death;  
 For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass; the path that each man trod 10  
 Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds.  
 What fame is left for human deeds  
 In endless age? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,  
 Fade wholly, while the soul exults,  
 And self-infolds the large results 15  
 Of force that would have forged a name.

## LXXXIV

As sometimes in a dead man's face,  
 To those that watch it more and more,  
 A likeness, hardly seen before,  
 Comes out—to some one of his race;

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,  
 I see thee what thou art, and know  
 Thy likeness to the wise below,  
 Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,  
 And what I see I leave unsaid, 10  
 Nor speak it, knowing Death has made  
 His darkness beautiful with thee.

## LXXXV

I leave thy praises unexpressed  
 In verse that brings myself relief,  
 And by the measure of my grief  
 I leave thy greatness to be guessed.

What practice howsoe'er expert 5  
 In fitting aptest words to things,  
 Or voice the richest-toned that sings,  
 Hath power to give thee as thou wert?

I care not in these fading days 10  
 To raise a cry that lasts not long,  
 And round thee with the breeze of song  
 To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perished in the green,  
 And, while we breathe beneath the sun,  
 The world which credits what is done 15  
 Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame;  
 But somewhere, out of human view,  
 Whate'er thy hands are set to do  
 Is wrought with tumult of acclaim. 20

## LXXXVI

Take wings of fancy, and ascend,  
 And in a moment set thy face  
 Where all the starry heavens of space  
 Are sharpened to a needle's end;<sup>1</sup>

Take wings of foresight; lighten through 5  
 The secular abyss<sup>2</sup> to come,  
 And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb  
 Before the moldering of a yew;

And if the matin songs, that woke  
 The darkness of our planet, last, 10  
 Thine own shall wither in the vast,  
 Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy bowers  
 With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain;  
 And what are they when these remain 15  
 The ruined shells of hollow towers?

## LXXXVII

What hope is here for modern rime  
 To him who turns a musing eye  
 On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie  
 Foreshortened in the tract of time?

<sup>1</sup>So distant in void space that all our firmament would appear to be a needle-point thence (Tennyson's note).

<sup>2</sup>The abyss of the ages.



These mortal lullabies of pain  
 May bind a book, may line a box,  
 May serve to curl a maiden's locks;  
 Or when a thousand moons shall wane

5

A man upon a stall may find,  
 And, passing, turn the page that tells  
 A grief, then changed to something else,  
 Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

10

But what of that? My darkened ways  
 Shall ring with music all the same;  
 To breathe my loss is more than fame,  
 To utter love more sweet than praise.

15

## LXXVIII

Again at Christmas did we weave  
 The holly round the Christmas hearth;  
 The silent snow possessed the earth,  
 And calmly fell our Christmas-eve.

The yule-clog<sup>1</sup> sparkled keen with frost,  
 No wing of wind the region swept,  
 But over all things brooding slept  
 The quiet sense of something lost.

5

As in the winters left behind,  
 Again our ancient games had place,  
 The mimic picture's breathing grace,  
 And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

10

Who showed a token of distress?  
 No single tear, no mark of pain—  
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?  
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?

15

O last regret, regret can die!  
 No—mixed with all this mystic frame,  
 Her deep relations are the same,  
 But with long use her tears are dry.

20

## LXXIX

"More than my brothers are to me,"—  
 Let this not vex thee,<sup>2</sup> noble heart!  
 I know thee of what force thou art  
 To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,  
 As molded like in Nature's mint;  
 And hill and wood and field did print  
 The same sweet forms in either mind.

5

For us the same cold streamlet curled  
 Through all his eddying coves, the same  
 All winds that roam the twilight came  
 In whispers of the beauteous world.

10

<sup>1</sup>Log.<sup>2</sup>Charles, Tennyson's brother. The line within quotation-marks is the last line of Section IX.

At one dear knee we proffered vows,  
 One lesson from one book we learned,  
 Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turned  
 To black and brown on kindred brows.

15

And so my wealth resembles thine,  
 But he was rich where I was poor,  
 And he supplied my want the more  
 As his unlikeness fitted mine.

20

## LXXX

If any vague desire should rise,  
 That holy Death ere Arthur died  
 Had moved me kindly from his side,  
 And dropped the dust on tearless eyes;

Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,  
 The grief my loss in him had wrought,  
 A grief as deep as life or thought,  
 But stayed in peace with God and man.

5

I make a picture in the brain;  
 I hear the sentence that he speaks;  
 He bears the burthen of the weeks,  
 But turns his burthen into gain.

10

His credit thus shall set me free;  
 And, influence-rich to soothe and save,  
 Unused example from the grave  
 Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

15

## LXXXI

Could I have said while he was here,  
 "My love shall now no further range;  
 There cannot come a mellow change,  
 For now is love mature in ear"?

Love, then, had hope of richer store:  
 What end is here to my complaint?  
 This haunting whisper makes me faint,  
 "More years had made me love thee more."

5

But Death returns an answer sweet:  
 "My sudden frost was sudden gain,  
 And gave all ripeness to the grain  
 It might have drawn from after-heat."

10

## LXXXII

I wage not any feud with Death  
 For changes wrought on form and face;  
 No lower life that earth's embrace  
 May breed with him can fright my faith.

Eternal process moving on,  
 From state to state the spirit walks;  
 And these are but the shattered stalks,  
 Or ruined chrysalis of one.

5

Nor blame I Death, because he bare  
 The use of virtue out of earth;  
 I know transplanted human worth  
 Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak  
 The wrath that garners in my heart:  
 He put our lives so far apart  
 We cannot hear each other speak.

## LXXXIII

Dip down upon the northern shore,  
 O sweet new-year delaying long;  
 Thou doest expectant Nature wrong;  
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,  
 Thy sweetness from its proper place?  
 Can trouble live with April days,  
 Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,  
 The little speedwell's darling blue,  
 Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,  
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,  
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,  
 That longs to burst a frozen bud  
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

## LXXXIV

When I contemplate all alone  
 The life that had been thine below,  
 And fix my thoughts on all the glow  
 To which thy crescent would have grown,

I see thee sitting crowned with good,  
 A central warmth diffusing bliss  
 In glance and smile, and clasp and kiss,  
 On all the branches of thy blood;

Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine;  
 For now the day was drawing on,  
 When thou shouldst link thy life with one  
 Of mine own house,<sup>1</sup> and boys of thine

Had babbled "Uncle" on my knee;  
 But that remorseless iron hour  
 Made cypress of her orange flower,  
 Despair of hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,  
 To clap their cheeks, to call them mine.  
 I see their unborn faces shine  
 Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honored guest,  
 Thy partner in the flowery walk

Of letters, genial table-talk,  
 Or deep dispute, and graceful jest;

While now thy prosperous labor fills  
 The lips of men with honest praise,  
 And sun by sun the happy days  
 Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair;  
 And all the train of bounteous hours  
 Conduct, by paths of growing powers,  
 To reverence and the silver hair;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,  
 Her lavish mission richly wrought,  
 Leaving great legacies of thought,  
 Thy spirit should fail from off the globe;

What time mine own might also flee,  
 As linked with thine in love and fate,  
 And, hovering o'er the dolorous strait  
 To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,  
 And He that died in Holy Land  
 Would reach us out the shining hand,  
 And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?  
 Ah, backward fancy, wherefore wake  
 The old bitterness again, and break  
 The low beginnings of content?

LXXXV<sup>2</sup>

This truth came borne with bier and pall,  
 I felt it, when I sorrowed most,  
 'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
 Than never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,  
 Demanding, so to bring relief  
 To this which is our common grief,  
 What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above  
 Be dimmed of sorrow, or sustained;  
 And whether love for him have drained  
 My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws  
 A faithful answer from the breast,  
 Through light reproaches, half expressed,  
 And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,  
 Till on mine ear this message falls,  
 That in Vienna's fatal walls  
 God's finger touched him, and he slept.

<sup>2</sup>This section is addressed to Edmund Lushington, whose marriage to Tennyson's sister Cecilia is celebrated in the Epilogue which concludes *In Memoriam*.

<sup>1</sup>Emily, Tennyson's sister.

The great Intelligences fair  
That range above our mortal state,  
In circle round the blessed gate,  
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him through the blissful climes, 25  
And showed him in the fountain fresh  
All knowledge that the sons of flesh  
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remained, whose hopes were dim,  
Whose life, whose thoughts were little  
worth, 30  
To wander on a darkened earth,  
Where all things round me breathed of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,  
O heart, with kindest motion warm,  
O sacred essence, other form, 35  
O solemn ghost, O crownéd soul!

Yet none could better know than I,  
How much of act at human hands  
The sense of human will demands  
By which we dare to live or die. 40

Whatever way my days decline,  
I felt and feel, though left alone,  
His being working in mine own,  
The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses decked 45  
With gifts of grace, that might express  
All-comprehensive tenderness,  
All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved  
To works of weakness, but I find 50  
An image comforting the mind,  
And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,  
That loved to handle spiritual strife,  
Diffused the shock through all my life, 55  
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again  
For other friends that once I met;  
Nor can it suit me to forget  
The mighty hopes that make us men. 60

I woo your love: I count it crime  
To mourn for any overmuch;  
I, the divided half of such  
A friendship as had mastered Time;

Which masters Time indeed, and is 65  
Eternal, separate from fears.  
The all-assuming months and years  
Can take no part away from this;

But Summer on the steaming floods,  
And Spring that swells the narrow brooks,  
And Autumn, with a noise of rooks, 71  
That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave  
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,  
My old affection of the tomb, 75  
And my prime passion in the grave.

My old affection of the tomb,  
A part of stillness, yearns to speak:  
"Arise, and get thee forth and seek  
A friendship for the years to come. 80

"I watch thee from the quiet shore;  
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;  
But in dear words of human speech  
We two communicate no more."

And I, "Can clouds of nature stain 85  
The starry clearness of the free?  
How is it? Canst thou feel for me  
Some painless sympathy with pain?"

And lightly does the whisper fall:  
"Tis hard for thee to fathom this; 90  
I triumph in conclusive bliss,  
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead;  
Or so methinks the dead would say;  
Or so shall grief with symbols play 95  
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,  
That these things pass, and I shall prove  
A meeting somewhere, love with love,  
I crave your pardon, O my friend; 100

If not so fresh, with love as true,  
I, clasping brother-hands, aver  
I could not, if I would, transfer  
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart 105  
The promise of the golden hours?  
First love, first friendship, equal powers,  
That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,  
That beats within a lonely place, 110  
That yet remembers his embrace,  
But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, though widowed, may not rest  
Quite in the love of what is gone,  
But seeks to beat in time with one 115  
That warms another living breast.



Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,  
 Knowing the primrose yet is dear,  
 The primrose of the later year,  
 As not unlike to that of Spring. 120

## LXXXVI

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,  
 That rollest from the gorgeous gloom  
 Of evening over brake and bloom  
 And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below 5  
 Through all the dewy tasseled wood,  
 And shadowing down the hornéd<sup>1</sup> flood  
 In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
 The full new life that feeds thy breath 10  
 Throughout my frame, till Doubt and  
 Death,  
 Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas  
 On leagues of odor streaming far,  
 To where in yonder orient star 15  
 A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

## LXXXVII

I passed beside the reverend walls  
 In which of old I wore the gown;  
 I roved at random through the town,  
 And saw the tumult of the halls;

And heard once more in college fanes 5  
 The storm their high-built organs make,  
 And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
 The prophet blazoned on the panes;

And caught once more the distant shout,  
 The measured pulse of racing oars 10  
 Among the willows; paced the shores  
 And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt  
 The same, but not the same; and last 15  
 Up that long walk of limes I passed  
 To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door.  
 I lingered; all within was noise  
 Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys  
 That crashed the glass and beat the floor; 20

Where once we held debate, a band  
 Of youthful friends, on mind and art,  
 And labor, and the changing mart,  
 And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair, 25  
 But send it slackly from the string;  
 And one would pierce an outer ring,  
 And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
 Would cleave the mark. A willing ear 30  
 We lent him. Who but hung to hear  
 The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace  
 And music in the bounds of law,  
 To those conclusions when we saw 35  
 The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow  
 In azure orbits heavenly-wise;  
 And over those ethereal eyes  
 The bar of Michael Angelo?<sup>2</sup> 40

## LXXXVIII

Wild bird,<sup>3</sup> whose warble, liquid sweet,  
 Rings Eden through the budded quicks,<sup>4</sup>  
 O tell me where the senses mix,  
 O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate: fierce extremes employ 5  
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,  
 And in the midmost heart of grief  
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy;

And I—my harp would prelude woe—  
 I cannot all command the strings; 10  
 The glory of the sum of things  
 Will flash along the chords and go.

## LXXXIX

Witch-elms that counterchange<sup>5</sup> the floor  
 Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright;  
 And thou, with all thy breadth and height  
 Of foliage, towering sycamore;

How often, hither wandering down, 5  
 My Arthur found your shadows fair,  
 And shook to all the liberal air  
 The dust and din and steam of town!

He brought an eye for all he saw;  
 He mixed in all our simple sports; 10  
 They pleased him, fresh from brawling  
 courts  
 And dusty purlieus of the law.

<sup>2</sup>These lines I wrote from what Arthur Hallam said after reading of the prominent ridge of bone over the eyes of Michael Angelo: "Alfred, look over my eyes; surely I have the bar of Michael Angelo!" (Tennyson.)

<sup>3</sup>Presumably the nightingale.

<sup>4</sup>Hedge-rows formed of living shrubs or small trees.

<sup>5</sup>Checker.

<sup>1</sup>Winding.

O joy to him in this retreat,  
 Immantled in ambrosial dark,  
 To drink the cooler air, and mark 15  
 The landscape winking through the heat!

O sound to rout the brood of cares,  
 The sweep of scythe in morning dew,  
 The gust that round the garden flew,  
 And tumbled half the mellowing pears! 20

O bliss, when all in circle drawn  
 About him, heart and ear were fed  
 To hear him, as he lay and read  
 The Tuscan poets on the lawn!

Or in the all-golden afternoon 25  
 A guest, or happy sister, sung,  
 Or here she brought the harp and flung  
 A ballad to the brightening moon.

Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,  
 Beyond the bounding hill to stray, 30  
 And break the livelong summer day  
 With banquet in the distant woods;

Whereat we glanced from theme to theme,  
 Discussed the books to love or hate,  
 Or touched the changes of the state, 35  
 Or threaded some Socratic dream;

But if I praised the busy town,  
 He loved to rail against it still,  
 For "ground in yonder social mill  
 We rub each other's angles down, 40

"And merge," he said, "in form and gloss  
 The picturesque of man and man."  
 We talked: the stream beneath us ran,  
 The wine-flask lying couched in moss,

Or cooled within the glooming wave; 45  
 And last, returning from afar,  
 Before the crimson-circled star  
 Had fallen into her father's grave,<sup>1</sup>

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,  
 We heard behind the woodbine veil 50  
 The milk that bubbled in the pail,  
 And buzzings of the honeyed hours.

## XC

He tasted love with half his mind,  
 Nor ever drank the inviolate spring  
 Where nearest heaven, who first could fling  
 This bitter seed among mankind:

<sup>1</sup>Before Venus, the evening star, had dipped into the sunset. The planets, according to Laplace, were evolved from the sun (Tennyson).

That could the dead, whose dying eyes 5  
 Were closed with wail, resume their life,  
 They would but find in child and wife  
 An iron welcome when they rise.

'Twas well, indeed, when warm with wine,  
 To pledge them with a kindly tear, 10  
 To talk then o'er, to wish them here,  
 To count their memories half divine;

But if they came who passed away,  
 Behold their brides in other hands;  
 The hard heir strides about their lands, 15  
 And will not yield them for a day.

Yea, though their sons were none of these,  
 Not less the yet-loved sire would make  
 Confusion worse than death, and shake  
 The pillars of domestic peace. 20

Ah, dear, but come thou back to me!  
 Whatever change the years have wrought,  
 I find not yet one lonely thought  
 That cries against my wish for thee.

## XCI

When rosy plumelets tuft the larch,  
 And rarely pipes the mounted thrush,  
 Or underneath the barren bush  
 Flits by the sea-blue bird of March;<sup>2</sup>

Come, wear the form by which I know 5  
 Thy spirit in time among thy peers:  
 The hope of unaccomplished years  
 Be large and lucid round thy brow.

When summer's hourly-mellowing change  
 May breathe, with many roses sweet, 10  
 Upon the thousand waves of wheat  
 That ripple round the lowly grange,

Come; not in watches of the night,  
 But where the sunbeam broodeth warm,  
 Come, beauteous in thine after form, 15  
 And like a finer light in light.

## XCII

If any vision should reveal  
 Thy likeness, I might count it vain  
 As but the canker of the brain;  
 Yea, though it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast 5  
 Together in the days behind,  
 I might but say, I hear a wind  
 Of memory murmuring the past.

<sup>2</sup>The kingfisher.

Yea, though it spake and bared to view  
 A fact within the coming year; 10  
 And though\* the months, revolving near,  
 Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,  
 But spiritual presentiments,  
 And such refraction of events 15  
 As often rises ere they rise.

## XCIII

I shall not see thee. Dare I say  
 No spirit ever brake the band  
 That stays him from the native land  
 Where first he walked when clasped in clay?

No visual shade of some one lost, 5  
 But he, the Spirit himself, may come  
 Where all the nerve of sense is numb,  
 Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.

O, therefore from thy sightless range  
 With gods in unconjectured bliss, 10  
 O, from the distance of the abyss  
 Of tenfold-complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter; hear  
 The wish too strong for words to name,  
 That in this blindness of the frame 15  
 My Ghost may feel that thine is near.

## XCIV

How pure at heart and sound in head,  
 With what divine affections bold  
 Should be the man whose thought would  
 hold  
 An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call 5  
 The spirits from their golden day,  
 Except, like them, thou too canst say,  
 My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,  
 Imaginations calm and fair, 10  
 The memory like a cloudless air,  
 The conscience as a sea at rest;

But when the heart is full of din,  
 And doubt beside the portal waits,  
 They can but listen at the gates, 15  
 And hear the household jar within.

## XCV

By night we lingered on the lawn,  
 For underfoot the herb was dry;  
 And genial warmth; and o'er the sky  
 The silvery haze of summer drawn;

And calm that let the tapers burn 5  
 Unwavering; not a cricket chirred;  
 The brook alone far-off was heard,  
 And on the board the fluttering urn.

And bats went round in fragrant skies,  
 And wheeled or lit the filmy shapes 10  
 That haunt the dusk, with ermine capes  
 And woolly breasts and beaded eyes;

While now we sang old songs that pealed  
 From knoll to knoll, where, couched at ease,  
 The white kine glimmered, and the trees 15  
 Laid their dark arms about the field.

But when those others, one by one,  
 Withdrew themselves from me and night,  
 And in the house light after light  
 Went out, and I was all alone, 20

A hunger seized my heart; I read  
 Of that glad year which once had been,  
 In those fallen leaves which kept their green, 10  
 The noble letters of the dead.

And strangely on the silence broke 25  
 The silent-speaking words, and strange  
 Was love's dumb cry defying change  
 To test his worth; and strangely spoke

The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell  
 On doubts that drive the coward back, 30  
 And keen through wordy snares to track  
 Suggestion to her inmost cell.

So word by word, and line by line,  
 The dead man touched me from the past,  
 And all at once it seemed at last 35  
 The living soul was flashed on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and whirled  
 About empyreal heights of thought,  
 And came on that which is, and caught  
 The deep pulsations of the world, 40

Æonian music measuring out  
 The steps of Time—the shocks of Chance—  
 The blows of Death. At length my trance  
 Was canceled, stricken through with doubt.

Vague words! but ah, how hard to frame 45  
 In matter-molded forms of speech,  
 Or even for intellect to reach  
 Through memory that which I became;

Till now the doubtful dusk revealed  
 The knolls once more where, couched at  
 ease, 50  
 The white kine glimmered, and the trees  
 Laid their dark arms about the field;



And sucked from out the distant gloom  
 A breeze began to tremble o'er  
 The large leaves of the sycamore, 55  
 And fluctuate all the still perfume,

And gathering freshlier overhead,  
 Rocked the full-foliaged elms, and swung  
 The heavy-folded rose, and flung  
 The lilies to and fro, and said, 60

"The dawn, the dawn," and died away;  
 And East and West, without a breath,  
 Mixed their dim lights, like life and death,  
 To broaden into boundless day.

## XCVI

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes  
 Are tender over drowning flies,  
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew 5  
 In many a subtle question versed,  
 Who touched a jarring lyre at first,  
 But ever strove to make it true;

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,  
 At last he beat his music out. 10  
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,  
 He would not make his judgment blind,  
 He faced the specters of the mind 15  
 And laid them; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own,  
 And Power was with him in the night,  
 Which makes the darkness and the light,  
 And dwells not in the light alone, 20

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
 While Israel made their gods of gold,  
 Although the trumpet blew so loud.<sup>1</sup>

## XCVII

My love has talked with rocks and trees;  
 He finds on misty mountain-ground  
 His own vast shadow glory-crowned;  
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life— 5  
 I looked on these and thought of thee  
 In vastness and in mystery,  
 And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on eye,  
 Their hearts of old have beat in tune, 10  
 Their meetings made December June,  
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never passed away;  
 The days she never can forget  
 Are earnest that he loves her yet, 15  
 Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart;  
 He loves her yet, she will not weep,  
 Though rapt in matters dark and deep  
 He seems to slight her simple heart. 20

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,  
 He reads the secret of the star,  
 He seems so near and yet so far,  
 He looks so cold: she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before, 25  
 A withered violet is her bliss;  
 She knows not what his greatness is,  
 For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings  
 Of early faith and plighted vows; 30  
 She knows but matters of the house,  
 And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move,  
 She darkly feels him great and wise,  
 She dwells on him with faithful eyes, 35  
 "I cannot understand; I love."

## XCVIII

You leave us:<sup>2</sup> you will see the Rhine,  
 And those fair hills I sailed below,  
 When I was there with him; and go  
 By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath, 5  
 That city. All her splendor seems  
 No livelier than the wisp that gleams  
 On Lethe in the eyes of Death.

Let her great Danube rolling fair  
 Enwind her isles, unmarked of me; 10  
 I have not seen, I will not see  
 Vienna; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts  
 The birth, the bridal; friend from friend  
 Is oftener parted, fathers bend 15  
 Above more graves, a thousand wants

<sup>1</sup>See Exodus, xix and xxii.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Tennyson and his bride, who on their marriage-tour visited Vienna.

Gnarr<sup>1</sup> at the heels of men, and prey  
 By each cold hearth, and sadness flings  
 Her shadow on the blaze of kings.  
 And yet myself have heard him say, 20

That not in any mother town  
 With statelier progress to and fro  
 The double tides of chariots flow  
 By park and suburb under brown

Of lustier leaves; nor more content, 25  
 He told me, lives in any crowd,  
 When all is gay with lamps, and loud  
 With sport and song, in booth and tent,

Imperial halls, or open plain;  
 And wheels the circled dance, and breaks 30  
 The rocket molten into flakes  
 Of crimson or in emerald rain.

## XCIX

Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
 So loud with voices of the birds,  
 So thick with lowings of the herds,  
 Day, when I lost the flower of men;

Who tremblest through thy darkling red 5  
 On yon swollen brook that bubbles fast  
 By meadows breathing of the past,  
 And woodlands holy to the dead;

Who murmurest in the foliated eaves  
 A song that slights the coming care, 10  
 And Autumn laying here and there  
 A fiery finger on the leaves;

Who wakenest with thy balmy breath  
 To myriads on the genial earth,  
 Memories of bridal, or of birth, 15  
 And unto myriads more, of death.

O, wheresoever those may be,  
 Betwixt the slumber of the poles,  
 To-day they count as kindred souls;  
 They know me not, but mourn with me. 20

C<sup>2</sup>

I climb the hill: from end to end  
 Of all the landscape underneath,  
 I find no place that does not breathe  
 Some gracious memory of my friend;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold, 5  
 Or low morass and whispering reed,  
 Or simple stile from mead to mead,  
 Or sheepwalk up the windy wold;

Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw  
 That hears the latest linnet trill, 10  
 Nor quarry trenched along the hill  
 And haunted by the wrangling daw;

Nor runlet tinkling from the rock;  
 Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves 14  
 To left and right through meadowy curves,  
 That feeds the mothers of the flock;

But each has pleased a kindred eye,  
 And each reflects a kindlier day;  
 And, leaving these, to pass away,  
 I think once more he seems to die. 20

## CI

Unwatched, the garden bough shall sway,  
 The tender blossom flutter down,  
 Unloved, that beech will gather brown,  
 \*This maple burn itself away;

Unloved, the sunflower, shining fair, 5  
 Ray round with flames her disk of seed,  
 And many a rose-carnation feed  
 With summer spice the humming air;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,  
 The brook shall babble down the plain, 10  
 At noon or when the Lesser Wain  
 Is twisting round the polar star;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,  
 And flood the haunts of hern and crake, 15  
 Or into silver arrows break  
 The sailing moon in creek and cove;

Till from the garden and the wild  
 A fresh association blow,  
 And year by year the landscape grow  
 Familiar to the stranger's child; 20

As year by year the laborer tills  
 His wonted glebe, or lops the glades,  
 And year by year our memory fades  
 From all the circle of the hills.

## CII

We leave the well-belovéd place  
 Where first we gazed upon the sky;  
 The roofs that heard our earliest cry  
 Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home, 5  
 As down the garden-walks I move,  
 Two spirits of a diverse love  
 Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, "Here thy boyhood sung  
 Long since its matin song, and heard 10  
 The low love-language of the bird  
 In native hazels tassel-hung."

<sup>1</sup>Snarl.<sup>2</sup>This and the two following sections were occasioned by the removal of the Tennysons from Somersby.

The other answers, "Yea, but here  
Thy feet have strayed in after hours  
With thy lost friend among the bowers, 15  
And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,  
And each prefers his separate claim,  
Poor rivals in a losing game,  
That will not yield each other way. 20

I turn to go; my feet are set  
To leave the pleasant fields and farms;  
They<sup>1</sup> mix in one another's arms  
To one pure image of regret.

## CIII

On that last night before we went  
From out the doors where I was bred,  
I dreamed a vision of the dead,  
Which left my after-morn content.

Methought I dwelt within a hall, 5  
And maidens<sup>2</sup> with me; distant hills  
From hidden summits fed with rills  
A river sliding by the wall.

The hall with harp and carol rang.  
They sang of what is wise and good 10  
And graceful. In the center stood  
A statue veiled, to which they sang;

And which, though veiled, was known to me,  
The shape of him I loved, and love  
For ever. Then flew in a dove 15  
And brought a summons from the sea;<sup>3</sup>

And when they learned that I must go,  
They wept and wailed, but led the way  
To where a little shallop lay  
At anchor in the flood below; 20

And on by many a level mead,  
And shadowing bluff that made the banks,  
We glided winding under ranks  
Of iris and the golden reed;

And still as vaster grew the shore<sup>4</sup> 25  
And rolled the floods in grander space,  
The maidens gathered strength and grace  
And presence, lordlier than before;

And I myself, who sat apart  
And watched them, waxed in every limb;  
I felt the thews of Anakim,<sup>5</sup> 31  
The pulses of a Titan's heart;

As one would sing the death of war,  
And one would chant the history  
Of that great race which is to be, 35  
And one the shaping of a star;<sup>6</sup>

Until the forward-creeping tides  
Began to foam, and we to draw  
From deep to deep, to where we saw  
A great ship lift her shining sides. 40

The man we loved was there on deck,  
But thrice as large as man he bent  
To greet us. Up the side I went,  
And fell in silence on his neck;

Whereat those maidens with one mind 45  
Bewailed their lot; I did them wrong:  
"We served thee here," they said, "so long,  
And wilt thou leave us now behind?"

So rapt I was, they could not win  
An answer from my lips, but he 50  
Replying, "Enter likewise ye  
And go with us": they entered in.

And while the wind began to sweep  
A music out of sheet and shroud,  
We steered her toward a crimson cloud 55  
That landlike slept along the deep.

## CIV

The time draws near the birth of Christ;  
The moon is hid, the night is still;  
A single church below the hill  
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below, 5  
That wakens at this hour of rest  
A single murmur in the breast,  
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,  
In lands where not a memory strays, 10  
Nor landmark breathes of other days,  
But all is new unhallowed ground.

## CV

To-night ungathered let us leave  
This laurel, let this holly stand:  
We live within the stranger's land,  
And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

<sup>1</sup>The rivals of the preceding stanza.

<sup>2</sup>They are the muses, poetry, arts—all that made life beautiful here, which we hope will pass with us beyond the grave (Tennyson). Tennyson also stated that the "hidden summits" of the following line and the "river" of the last line of the stanza mean, respectively, "the divine" and "life."

<sup>3</sup>Eternity (Tennyson).

<sup>4</sup>The progress of the Age (Tennyson).

<sup>5</sup>Giants (see Deuteronomy, ix, 2).

<sup>6</sup>The great hopes of humanity and science (Tennyson).



Our father's dust is left alone  
And silent under other snows:  
There in due time the woodbine blows,  
The violet comes, but we are gone.

5

No more shall wayward grief abuse  
The genial hour with mask and mime;  
For change of place, like growth of time,  
Has broke the bond of dying use.

10

Let cares that petty shadows cast,  
By which our lives are chiefly proved,  
A little spare the night I loved,  
And hold it solemn to the past.

15

But let no footstep beat the floor,  
Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm;  
For who would keep an ancient form  
Through which the spirit breathes no more?

20

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;  
Nor harp be touched, nor flute be blown;  
No dance, no motion, save alone  
What lightens in the lucid East

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.  
Long sleeps the summer in the seed;  
Run out your measured arcs, and lead  
The closing cycle rich in good.

25

## CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

5

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

10

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

15

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rimes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

20

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

25

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

30

## CVII

It is the day when he was born,<sup>1</sup>  
A bitter day that early sank  
Behind a purple-frosty bank  
Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.

The time admits not flowers or leaves  
To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies  
The blast of North and East, and ice  
Makes daggers at the sharpened eaves,

5

And bristles all the brakes and thorns  
To yon hard crescent, as she hangs  
Above the wood which grides and clangs  
Its leafless ribs and iron horns

10

Together, in the drifts that pass  
To darken on the rolling brine  
That breaks the coast. But fetch the wine,  
Arrange the board and brim the glass;

16

Bring in great logs and let them lie,  
To make a solid core of heat;  
Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat  
Of all things even as he were by;

20

We keep the day. With festal cheer,  
With books and music, surely we  
Will drink to him, whate'er he be,  
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

## CVIII

I will not shut me from my kind,  
And, lest I stiffen into stone,  
I will not eat my heart alone,  
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,  
And vacant yearning, though with might  
To scale the heaven's highest height,  
Or dive below the wells of death?

5

What find I in the highest place,  
But mine own phantom chanting hymns?  
And on the depths of death there swims  
The reflex of a human face.

9

<sup>1</sup> 1 February.

I'll rather take what fruit may be  
 Of sorrow under human skies:  
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise, 15  
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

## CLX

Heart-affluence in discursive talk  
 From household fountains never dry;  
 The critic clearness of an eye  
 That saw through all the Muses' walk;

Seraphic intellect and force 5  
 To seize and throw the doubts of man;  
 Impassioned logic, which outran  
 The hearer in its fiery course;

High nature amorous of the good,  
 But touched with no ascetic gloom; 10  
 And passion pure in snowy bloom  
 Through all the years of April blood;

A love of freedom rarely felt,  
 Of freedom in her regal seat  
 Of England; not the schoolboy heat, 15  
 The blind hysterics of the Celt;

And manhood fused with female grace  
 In such a sort, the child would twine  
 A trustful hand, unasked, in thine,  
 And find his comfort in thy face; 20

All these have been and thee mine eyes  
 Have looked on: if they looked in vain,  
 My shame is greater who remain,  
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

## CX

Thy converse drew us with delight,  
 The men of rather<sup>1</sup> and riper years;  
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,  
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung, 5  
 The proud was half disarmed of pride,  
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side<sup>2</sup>  
 To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,  
 The flippant put himself to school 10  
 And heard thee, and the brazen fool  
 Was softened, and he knew not why;

While I, thy nearest, sat apart,  
 And felt thy triumph was as mine;  
 And loved them more, that they were thine,  
 The graceful tact, the Christian art; 15

<sup>1</sup>Early.<sup>2</sup>The envious and venomous slanderer.

Nor mine the sweetness or the skill,  
 But mine the love that will not tire,  
 And, born of love, the vague desire 20  
 That spurs an imitative will.

## CXI

The churl in spirit, up or down  
 Along the scale of ranks, through all,  
 To him who grasps a golden ball,  
 By blood a king, at heart a clown,—

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil 5  
 His want in forms for fashion's sake,  
 Will let his coltish nature break  
 At seasons through the gilded pale;

For who can always act? but he,  
 To whom a thousand memories call, 10  
 Not being less but more than all  
 The gentleness he seemed to be,

Best seemed the thing he was, and joined  
 Each office of the social hour  
 To noble manners, as the flower 15  
 And native growth of noble mind;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
 Drew in the expression of an eye 20  
 Where God and Nature met in light;

And thus he bore without abuse  
 The grand old name of gentleman,  
 Defamed by every charlatan,  
 And soiled with all ignoble use.

## CXII

High wisdom holds my wisdom less,  
 That I, who gaze with temperate eyes  
 On glorious insufficiencies,  
 Set light by narrower perfectness.

But thou, that fillest all the room 5  
 Of all my love, art reason why  
 I seem to cast a careless eye  
 On souls, the lesser lords of doom.

For what wert thou? some novel power  
 Sprang up for ever at a touch, 10  
 And hope could never hope too much,  
 In watching thee from hour to hour,

Large elements in order brought,  
 And tracts of calm from tempest made, 15  
 And world-wide fluctuation swayed  
 In-vassal tides that followed thought.

## CXIII

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;  
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with thee  
 Which not alone had guided me,  
 But served the seasons that may rise;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen 5  
 In intellect, with force and skill  
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfill—  
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have been:

A life in civic action warm, 10  
 A soul on highest mission sent,  
 A potent voice of Parliament,  
 A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,  
 Becoming, when the time has birth,  
 A lever to uplift the earth 15  
 And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and go,  
 With agonies, with energies,  
 With overthrowings, and with cries, 20  
 And undulations to and fro.

## CXIV

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail  
 Against her beauty? May she mix  
 With men and prosper! Who shall fix  
 Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire; 5  
 She sets her forward countenance  
 And leaps into the future chance,  
 Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain— 10  
 She cannot fight the fear of death.  
 What is she, cut from love and faith,  
 But some wild Pallas! from the brain

Of demons? fiery-hot to burst 15  
 All barriers in her onward race  
 For power. Let her know her place;  
 She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild, 20  
 If all be not in vain, and guide  
 Her footsteps, moving side by side  
 With Wisdom, like the younger child;

For she is earthly of the mind,  
 But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.  
 O friend, who camest to thy goal  
 So early, leaving me behind,

<sup>1</sup>Pallas Athena sprang full-grown and full-armed from the head of Zeus.

I would the great world grew like thee, 25  
 Who grewest not alone in power  
 And knowledge, but by year and hour  
 In reverence and in charity.

## CXV

Now fades the last long streak of snow,  
 Now burgeons every maze of quick<sup>2</sup>  
 About the flowering squares,<sup>3</sup> and thick  
 By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long, 5  
 The distance takes a lovelier hue,  
 And drowned in yonder living blue  
 The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,  
 The flocks are whiter down the vale, 10  
 And milkier every milky sail  
 On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives  
 In yonder greening gleam, and fly  
 The happy birds, that change their sky 15  
 To build and brood, that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast  
 Spring wakens too, and my regret  
 Becomes an April violet,  
 And buds and blossoms like the rest. 20

## CXVI

Is it, then, regret for buried time  
 The keenlier in sweet April wakes,  
 And meets the year, and gives and takes  
 The colors of the crescent prime?<sup>4</sup>

Not all: the songs, the stirring air, 5  
 The life re-orient out of dust,  
 Cry through the sense to hearten trust  
 In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine 10  
 Upon me, while I muse alone,  
 And that dear voice, I once have known,  
 Still speak to me of me and mine.

Yet less of sorrow lives in me  
 For days of happy commune dead,  
 Less yearning for the friendship fled 15  
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

## CXVII

O days and hours, your work is this,  
 To hold me from my proper place,  
 A little while from his embrace,  
 For fuller gain of after bliss;

<sup>2</sup>Hedge.

<sup>3</sup>Fields.

<sup>4</sup>Spring.



That out of distance might ensue 5  
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet,  
 And unto meeting, when we meet,  
 Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,<sup>1</sup>  
 And every span of shade that steals, 10  
 And every kiss of toothéd wheels,<sup>2</sup>  
 And all the courses of the suns.

## CXVIII

Contemplate all this work of Time,  
 The giant laboring in his youth;  
 Nor dream of human love and truth,  
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead 5  
 Are breathers of an ampler day  
 For ever nobler ends. They say,  
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
 And grew to seeming-random forms, 10  
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branched from clime to clime,  
 The herald of a higher race,  
 And of himself in higher place, 15  
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;  
 Or, crowned with attributes of woe  
 Like glories, move his course, and show 20  
 That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
 And heated hot with burning fears,  
 And dipped in baths of hissing tears,  
 And battered with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly 25  
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;  
 Move upward, working out the beast,  
 And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXIX

Doors, where my heart was used to beat  
 So quickly, not as one that weeps  
 I come once more; the city sleeps;  
 I smell the meadow in the street;

I hear a chirp of birds; I see 5  
 Betwixt the black fronts long-withdrawn  
 A light-blue lane of early dawn,  
 And think of early days and thee,

<sup>1</sup>In allusion to the hour-glass.

<sup>2</sup>The wheels of a clock.

And bless thee, for thy lips are bland,  
 And bright the friendship of thine eye; 10  
 And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh  
 I take the pressure of thine hand.

## CXX

I trust I have not wasted breath:  
 I think we are not wholly brain,  
 Magnetic mockeries; not in vain,  
 Like Paul with beasts,<sup>3</sup> I fought with Death;

Not only cunning casts in clay: 5  
 Let Science prove we are, and then  
 What matters Science unto men,  
 At least to me? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man who springs  
 Hereafter, up from childhood shape 10  
 His action like the greater ape,  
 But I was *born* to other things.

## CXXI

Sad Hesper<sup>4</sup> o'er the buried sun  
 And ready, thou, to die with him,  
 Thou watchest all things ever dim  
 And dimmer, and a glory done.

The team is loosened from the wain, 5  
 The boat is drawn upon the shore;  
 Thou listenest to the closing door,  
 And life is darkened in the brain.

Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,  
 By thee the world's great work is heard 10  
 Beginning, and the wakeful bird;  
 Behind thee comes the greater light.

The market boat is on the stream,  
 And voices hail it from the brink;  
 Thou hear'st the village hammer clink, 15  
 And see'st the moving of the team.

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name  
 For what is one, the first, the last,  
 Thou, like my present and my past,  
 Thy place is changed; thou art the same. 20

## CXXII

O, wast thou with me, dearest, then,  
 While I rose up against my doom,  
 And yearned to burst the folded gloom,  
 To bare the eternal heavens again,

<sup>3</sup>1 Corinthians, xv, 32.

<sup>4</sup>Hesper, the evening star, which follows the setting sun and watches the fading light and ending life of day, is also Phosphor, the morning star, which precedes the sun and sees the dawn of light and life. They are the same "planet of Love" (*Maud*), which does but change its place. And so the poet's past and present are in substance one thing (Love), which has merely changed its place in becoming present instead of past (A. C. Bradley).

To feel once more, in placid awe, 5  
 The strong imagination roll  
 A sphere of stars about my soul,  
 In all her motion one with law?

If thou wert with me, and the grave  
 Divide us not, be with me now, 10  
 And enter in at breast and brow,  
 Till all my blood, a fuller wave,

Be quickened with a livelier breath,  
 And like an inconsiderate boy,  
 As in the former flash of joy, 15  
 slip the thoughts of life and death;

And all the breeze of Fancy blows,  
 And every dewdrop paints a bow,<sup>1</sup>  
 The wizard lightnings deeply glow,  
 And every thought breaks out a rose. 20

## CXXIII

There rolls the deep where grew the tree.  
 O earth, what changes hast thou seen!  
 There where the long street roars hath been  
 The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow 5  
 From form to form, and nothing stands;  
 They melt like mist, the solid lands,  
 Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,  
 And dream my dream, and hold it true; 10  
 For though my lips may breathe adieu,  
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

## CXXIV

That which we dare invoke to bless;  
 Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;  
 He, They, One, All; within, without;<sup>2</sup>  
 The Power in darkness, whom we guess,—

I found Him not in world or sun, 5  
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye,  
 Nor through the questions men may try,  
 The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,  
 I heard a voice, "believe no more," 10  
 And heard an ever-breaking shore  
 That tumbled in the Godless deep,

A warmth within the breast would melt  
 The freezing reason's colder part,  
 And like a man in wrath the heart 15  
 Stood up and answered, "I have felt."

<sup>1</sup>Rainbow.<sup>2</sup>The Deity, however imagined to exist, whether as conceived by the theist, the polytheist, the monist, or the pantheist, or as inside us or outside us.

No, like a child in doubt and fear:  
 But that blind clamor made me wise;  
 Then was I as a child that cries,  
 But, crying, knows his father near; 20

And what I am beheld again  
 What is, and no man understands;  
 And out of darkness came the hands  
 That reach through nature, molding men.

## CXXV

Whatever I have said or sung,  
 Some bitter notes my harp would give,  
 Yea, though there often seemed to live  
 A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet Hope had never lost her youth, 5  
 She did but look through dimmer eyes;  
 Or Love but played with gracious lies,  
 Because he felt so fixed in truth;

And if the song were full of care,  
 He breathed the spirit of the song; 10  
 And if the words were sweet and strong  
 He set his royal signet there;

Abiding with me till I sail  
 To seek thee on the mystic deeps,  
 And this electric force, that keeps 15  
 A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

## CXXVI

Love is and was my lord and king,  
 And in his presence I attend  
 To hear the tidings of my friend,  
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord, 5  
 And will be, though as yet I keep  
 Within the court on earth, and sleep  
 Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel 5  
 Who moves about from place to place, 10  
 And whispers to the worlds of space,  
 In the deep night, that all is well.

## CXXVII

And all is well, though faith and form  
 Be sundered in the night of fear;  
 Well roars the storm to those that hear  
 A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread, 5  
 And justice, even though thrice again  
 The red fool-fury of the Seine<sup>3</sup>  
 Should pile her barricades with dead.

<sup>3</sup>The violent revolutions in France.

But ill for him that wears a crown,  
 And him, the lazar, in his rags!  
 They tremble, the sustaining crags;  
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

10

And molten up, and roar in flood;  
 The fortress crashes from on high,  
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,  
 And the great Æon<sup>1</sup> sinks in blood,

15

And compassed by the fires of hell;  
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star,  
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,  
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

20

## CXXXVIII

The love that rose on stronger wings,  
 Unpalsied when he met with Death,  
 Is comrade of the lesser faith  
 That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood  
 Of onward time shall yet be made,  
 And thronéd races may degrade;<sup>2</sup>  
 Yet, O ye mysteries of good,

5

Wild Hours that fly with Hope and Fear,  
 If all your office had to do  
 With old results that look like new—  
 If this were all your mission here,

10

To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,  
 To fool the crowd with glorious lies,  
 To cleave a creed in sects and cries,  
 To change the bearing of a word,

15

To shift an arbitrary power,  
 To cramp the student at his desk,  
 To make old bareness picturesque  
 And tuft with grass a feudal tower,

20

Why, then my scorn might well descend  
 On you and yours. I see in part  
 That all, as in some piece of art,  
 Is toil coöperant to an end.

## CXXXIX

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,  
 So far, so near in woe and weal,  
 O loved the most, when most I feel  
 There is a lower and a higher;

Known and unknown, human, divine;  
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye;  
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,  
 Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine;

5

Strange friend, past, present, and to be;  
 Loved deeper, darker understood;  
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
 And mingle all the world with thee.

10

## CXXX

Thy voice is on the rolling air;  
 I hear thee where the waters run;  
 Thou standest in the rising sun,  
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;  
 But though I seem in star and flower  
 To feel thee some diffusive power,  
 I do not therefore love thee less.

5

My love involves the love before;  
 My love is vaster passion now;  
 Though mix'd with God and Nature thou,  
 I seem to love thee more and more.

10

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;  
 I have thee still, and I rejoice;  
 I prosper, circled with thy voice;  
 I shall not lose thee though I die.

15

## CXXXI

O living will that shalt endure  
 When all that seems shall suffer shock,  
 Rise in the spiritual rock,<sup>3</sup>  
 Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust  
 A voice as unto him that hears,  
 A cry above the conquered years  
 To one that with us works, and trust,

5

With faith that comes of self-control,  
 The truths that never can be proved  
 Until we close with all we loved,  
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

10

O true and tried, so well and long,<sup>4</sup>  
 Demand not thou a marriage lay;  
 In that it is thy marriage day  
 Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss  
 Since first he told me that he loved  
 A daughter of our house, nor proved  
 Since that dark day a day like this;

5

<sup>3</sup>1 Corinthians, x, 4.

<sup>4</sup>This Epilogue is an epithalamium written to celebrate the marriage of Edmund Lushington to Tennyson's sister Cecilia in 1842. Tennyson said of *In Memoriam*: "It begins with a funeral and ends with a marriage—begins with death and ends in promise of a new life—a sort of *Divine Comedy*, cheerful at the close."

<sup>1</sup>The modern age.

<sup>2</sup>And races now highest may degenerate.



Though I since then have numbered o'er  
Some thrice three years;<sup>1</sup> they went and  
came, 10

Remade the blood and changed the frame,  
And yet is love not less, but more;

No longer caring to embalm  
In dying songs a dead regret,  
But like a statue solid-set, 15  
And molded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more  
Than in the summers that are flown,  
For I myself with these have grown  
To something greater than before; 20

Which makes appear the songs I made  
As echoes out of weaker times,  
As half but idle brawling rimes,  
The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,  
That must be made a wife ere noon?  
She enters, glowing like the moon  
Of Eden on its bridal bower. 25

On me she bends her blissful eyes  
And then on thee; they meet thy look  
And brighten like the star that shook  
Betwixt the palms of Paradise. 30

Oh, when her life was yet in bud,  
He<sup>2</sup> too foretold the perfect rose.  
For thee she grew, for thee she grows  
For ever, and as fair as good. 35

And thou art worthy, full of power;  
As gentle; liberal-minded, great,  
Consistent; wearing all that weight  
Of learning lightly like a flower.<sup>3</sup> 40

But now set out: the noon is near,  
And I must give away the bride;  
She fears not, or with thee beside  
And me behind her, will not fear.

For I that danced her on my knee, 45  
That watched her on her nurse's arm,  
That shielded all her life from harm,  
At last must part with her to thee;

Now waiting to be made a wife,  
Her feet, my darling, on the dead; 50

Their pensive tablets round her head,  
And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,  
The "Wilt thou?" answered, and again  
The "Wilt thou?" asked, till out of twain  
Her sweet "I will" has made you one. 56

Now sign your names, which shall be read,  
Mute symbols of a joyful morn,  
By village eyes as yet unborn.  
The names are signed, and overhead 60

Begins the clash and clang that tells  
The joy to every wandering breeze;  
The blind wall rocks, and on the trees  
The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours 65  
Await them. Many a merry face  
Salutes them—maidens of the place,  
That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride  
With him to whom her hand I gave. 70  
They leave the porch, they pass the grave  
That has to-day it's sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,  
For them the light of life increased,  
Who stay to share the morning feast, 75  
Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance  
To meet and greet a whiter sun;  
My drooping memory will not shun  
The foaming grape of eastern France. 80

It circles round, and fancy plays,  
And hearts are warmed and faces bloom,  
As drinking health to bride and groom  
We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I 85  
Conjecture of a stiller guest,  
Perchance, perchance, among the rest,  
And, though in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,  
And those white-favored horses wait; 90  
They rise, but linger; it is late;  
Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark  
From little cloudlets on the grass,  
But sweeps away as out we pass 95  
To range the woods, to roam the park,

<sup>1</sup>In making this statement Tennyson violates the internal chronology of the poem elsewhere maintained.

<sup>2</sup>Hallam.

<sup>3</sup>Lushington was a classical scholar, who became Professor of Greek at Glasgow.

Discussing how their courtship grew,  
 And talk of others that are wed,  
 And how she looked, and what he said,  
 And back we come at fall of dew. 100

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,  
 The shade of passing thought, the wealth  
 Of words and wit, the double health,  
 The crowning cup, the three-times-three,

And last the dance;—till I retire. 105  
 Dumb is that tower which spake so loud,  
 And high in heaven the streaming cloud,  
 And on the downs a rising fire:

And rise, O moon, from yonder down,  
 Till over down and over dale 110  
 All night the shining vapor sail  
 And pass the silent-lighted town,

The white-faced halls, the glancing rills,  
 And catch at every mountain head,  
 And o'er the friths that branch and spread  
 Their sleeping silver through the hills; 116

And touch with shade the bridal doors,  
 With tender gloom the roof, the wall;  
 And breaking let the splendor fall  
 To spangle all the happy shores 120

By which they rest, and ocean sounds,  
 And, star and system rolling past,  
 A soul shall draw from out the vast  
 And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved through life of lower phase, 125  
 Result in man, be born and think,  
 And act and love, a closer link  
 Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look  
 On knowledge; under whose command 130  
 Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand  
 Is Nature like an open book;

No longer half-akin to brute,  
 For all we thought and loved and did,  
 And hoped, and suffered, is but seed 135  
 Of what in them is flower and fruit;

Whereof the man that with me trod  
 This planet was a noble type  
 Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
 That friend of mine who lives in God, 140

That God, which ever lives and loves,  
 One God, one law, one element,  
 And one far-off divine event,  
 To which the whole creation moves.

## ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON<sup>1</sup>

### I

BURY the Great Duke  
 With an empire's lamentation,  
 Let us bury the Great Duke  
 To the noise of the mourning of a mighty  
 nation,  
 Mourning when their leaders fall, 5  
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

### II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?  
 Here, in streaming London's central roar.<sup>2</sup>  
 Let the sound of those he wrought for, 10  
 And the feet of those he fought for,  
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

### III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,  
 As fits an universal woe,  
 Let the long long procession go, 15  
 And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,  
 And let the mournful martial music blow;  
 The last great Englishman is low.

### IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
 Remembering all his greatness in the Past 20  
 No more in soldier fashion will he greet  
 With lifted hand the gazer in the street.  
 O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!<sup>3</sup>  
 Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,  
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute, 25  
 Whole in himself, a common good.  
 Mourn for the man of amplest influence,  
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,  
 Our greatest yet with least pretense,  
 Great in council and great in war, 30  
 Foremost captain of his time,  
 Rich in saving common-sense,  
 And, as the greatest only are,  
 In his simplicity sublime.  
 O good gray head which all men knew, 35  
 O voice from which their omens all men drew,  
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
 O fall'n at length that tower of strength  
 Which stood four-square to all the winds that  
 blew!

<sup>1</sup>Published on 18 November, 1852, the day of the Duke of Wellington's funeral. He died on 14 September.

<sup>2</sup>The Duke was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

<sup>3</sup>Wellington was much in the service of the state in the years following Waterloo, and from the autumn of 1828 until the autumn of 1830 he was Prime Minister.

Such was he whom we deplore. 40  
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.  
The great World-victor's victor<sup>1</sup> will be seen  
no more.

## V

All is over and done:  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
England, for thy son. 45  
Let the bell<sup>2</sup> be tolled.  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
And render him to the mold.  
Under the cross of gold  
That shines over city and river, 50  
There he shall rest for ever  
Among the wise and the bold.  
Let the bell be tolled:  
And a reverent people behold  
The towering car, the sable steeds: 55  
Bright let it be with its blazoned deeds,  
Dark in its funeral fold.  
Let the bell be tolled:  
And a deeper knell in the heart be knolled;  
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem rolled  
Through the dome of the golden cross; 61  
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;  
He knew their voices of old.  
For many a time in many a clime  
His captain's-ear has heard them boom 65  
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom:  
When he with those deep voices wrought,  
Guarding realms and kings from shame;  
With those deep voices our dead captain taught  
The tyrant,<sup>3</sup> and asserts his claim 70  
In that dread sound to the great name,  
Which he has worn so pure of blame,  
In praise and in dispraise the same,<sup>4</sup>  
A man of well-tempered frame.  
O civic muse, to such a name, 75  
To such a name for ages long,  
To such a name,  
Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
And ever-echoing avenues of song!

## VI

Who is he that cometh, like an honored guest,  
With banner and with music, with soldier and  
with priest, 81  
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my  
rest?<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*I.e.*, the conqueror of Napoleon.

<sup>2</sup>The Great Bell of St. Paul's, customarily tolled only at the death of members of the royal family, the bishop of London, the dean of the Cathedral, and the lord-mayor of London, was also tolled for Wellington.

<sup>3</sup>Napoleon.

<sup>4</sup>In 1830 Wellington became the object of popular attack because of his opposition to Parliamentary reform.

<sup>5</sup>The question is asked by Nelson, beside whose remains Wellington was buried in St. Paul's.

Mighty Seaman, this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea.  
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,  
The greatest sailor since our world began. 86  
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
To thee the greatest soldier comes;  
For this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea; 90  
His foes were thine;<sup>6</sup> he kept us free;  
O give him welcome, this is he  
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
And worthy to be laid by thee;  
For this is England's greatest son, 95  
He that gained a hundred fights,  
Nor ever lost an English gun;<sup>7</sup>  
This is he that far away  
Against the myriads of Assaye<sup>8</sup>  
Clashed with his fiery few and won; 100  
And underneath another sun,  
Warring on a later day,  
Round affrighted Lisbon drew  
The treble works,<sup>9</sup> the vast designs  
Of his labored rampart-lines, 105  
Where he greatly stood at bay,  
Whence he issued forth anew,  
And ever great and greater grew,  
Beating from the wasted vines  
Back to France her banded swarms, 110  
Back to France with countless blows,  
Till o'er the hills her eagles<sup>10</sup> flew  
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,  
Followed up in valley and glen  
With blare of bugle, clamor of men, 115  
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,  
And England pouring on her foes.  
Such a war had such a close.  
Again their ravening eagle rose  
In anger,<sup>11</sup> wheeled on Europe-shadowing  
wings, 120  
And barking for the thrones of kings;  
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown  
On that loud sabbath<sup>12</sup> shook the spoiler down;  
A day of onsets of despair!  
Dashed on every rocky square, 125  
Their surging charges foamed themselves  
away;

Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;  
Through the long-tormented air  
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,

<sup>6</sup>Nelson fought Napoleon and the French by sea as Wellington did by land.

<sup>7</sup>In twenty years of fighting Wellington never lost a battle, though he did lose two guns at Maya in 1813.

<sup>8</sup>In India, where Wellington defeated a Mahratta army ten times as large as his own.

<sup>9</sup>The lines of Torres Vedras, which enclosed the Peninsula on which Lisbon stands.

<sup>10</sup>The eagle was the ensign of the French regiments under the Empire.

<sup>11</sup>After Napoleon's escape from Elba.

<sup>12</sup>The Battle of Waterloo was fought on Sunday, 18 June, 1815.



And down we swept and charged and over-  
threw. 130

So great a soldier taught us there  
What long-enduring hearts could do  
On that world-earthquake, Waterloo!  
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,  
And pure as he from taint of craven guile, 135  
O savior of the silver-coasted isle,  
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
If aught of things that here befall  
Touch a spirit among things divine,  
If love of country move thee there at all, 140  
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!  
And through the centuries let a people's voice  
In full acclaim,  
A people's voice,  
The proof and echo of all human fame, 145  
A people's voice, when they rejoice  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
Attest their great commander's claim  
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,  
Eternal honor to his name. 150

## VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.  
Though all men else their nobler dreams for-  
get,  
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless  
Powers,<sup>1</sup>

Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set  
His Briton in blown seas and storming  
showers, 155

We have a voice, with which to pay the debt  
Of boundless love and reverence and regret  
To those great men who fought, and kept it  
ours.

And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;  
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the  
soul 160

Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,  
And save the one true seed of freedom sown  
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,  
That sober freedom out of which there  
springs

Our loyal passion for our temperate kings; 165  
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind  
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,  
And drill the raw world for the march of  
mind,

Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be  
just.

But wink no more in slothful overtrust.<sup>2</sup> 170

<sup>1</sup>The allusion is to the French Revolution of 1848, which was followed by political disturbances in many other European countries, and to the *coup d'état* of 1851 which placed Napoleon III on the French throne.

<sup>2</sup>The allusion is to a measure for the organization of the militia, prompted by fear of Napoleon III, which the House of Commons rejected in February, 1852. Tennyson strongly felt that it should have been passed.

Remember him who led your hosts;  
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.  
Your cannons molder on the seaward wall;  
His voice is silent in your council-hall  
For ever; and whatever tempests lour 175  
For ever silent; even if they broke  
In thunder, silent; yet remember all  
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;  
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,  
Nor paltered with Eternal God for power; 180  
Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow  
Through either babbling world of high and  
low;

Whose life was work, whose language rife  
With rugged maxims hewn from life;  
Who never spoke against a foe; 185  
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke  
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:  
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;  
Truth-lover was our English Duke;  
Whatever record leap to light 190  
He never shall be shamed.

## VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars  
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,  
Followed by the brave of other lands,<sup>3</sup>  
He, on whom from both her open hands 195  
Lavish Honor showered all her stars,  
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.<sup>4</sup>  
Yea, let all good things await

Him who cares not to be great,  
But as he saves or serves the state. 200

Not once or twice in our rough island-story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory:

He that walks it, only thirsting  
For the right, and learns to deaden  
Love of self, before his journey closes, 205  
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting  
Into glossy purples, which outredden  
All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory: 210  
He, that ever following her commands,  
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,  
Through the long gorge to the far light has  
won

His path upward, and prevailed, 214  
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled  
Are close upon the shining table-lands  
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.  
Such was he: his work is done.  
But while the races of mankind endure,  
Let his great example stand 220

<sup>3</sup>Representatives of all the chief European powers except Austria were at the funeral.

<sup>4</sup>Wellington had not only the star of the Garter and the stars of many other orders, British and foreign, but was made successively baron, viscount, earl, marquis, and duke. He was also voted £500,000 by the House of Commons.

Colossal, seen of every land,  
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:  
 Till in all lands and through all human story  
 The path of duty be the way to glory:  
 And let the land whose hearths he saved from  
 shame 225  
 For many and many an age proclaim  
 At civic revel and pomp and game,  
 And when the long-illuminated cities flame,  
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him, 230  
 Eternal honor to his name.

## IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
 By some yet unmolded tongue  
 Far on in summers that we shall not see:  
 Peace, it is a day of pain 235  
 For one about whose patriarchal knee  
 Late the little children clung:  
 O peace, it is a day of pain  
 For one, upon whose hand and heart and  
 brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe hung. 240

Ours the pain, be his the gain!  
 More than is of man's degree  
 Must be with us, watching here  
 At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere; 245  
 We revere, and we refrain

From talk of battles loud and vain  
 And brawling memories all too free  
 For such a wise humility  
 As befits a solemn fane: 250

We revere, and while we hear  
 The tides of Music's golden sea  
 Setting toward eternity,

Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,  
 Until we doubt not that for one so true 255

There must be other nobler work to do  
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,  
 And Victor he must ever be.

For though the Giant Ages heave the hill  
 And break the shore, and evermore 260  
 Make and break, and work their will;  
 Though world on world in myriad myriads  
 roll

Round us, each with different powers,  
 And other forms of life than ours,  
 What know we greater than the soul? 265

On God and Godlike men we build our trust.  
 Hush, the Dead March' wails in the people's  
 ears:

The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and  
 tears:

The black earth yawns: the mortal disappears;  
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust; 270

He is gone who seemed so great.—  
 Gone; but nothing can bereave him  
 Of the force he made his own  
 Being here, and we believe him  
 Something far advanced in State, 275  
 And that he wears a truer crown  
 Than any wreath that man can weave him.  
 Speak no more of his renown,  
 Lay your earthly fancies down,  
 And in the vast cathedral leave him. 280  
 God accept him, Christ receive him!

THE CHARGE OF THE  
LIGHT BRIGADE<sup>2</sup>

## I

HALF a league, half a league,  
 Half a league onward,  
 All in the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.  
 "Forward the Light Brigade!  
 Charge for the guns!" he said. 5  
 Into the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.

## II

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"  
 Was there a man dismayed?  
 Not though the soldier knew 10  
 Some one had blundered.  
 Theirs not to make reply,  
 Theirs not to reason why,  
 Theirs but to do and die. 15  
 Into the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.

## III

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon in front of them 20  
 Volleyed and thundered;  
 Stormed at with shot and shell,  
 Boldly they rode and well,  
 Into the jaws of Death,  
 Into the mouth of hell 25  
 Rode the six hundred.

## IV

Flashed all their sabers bare,  
 Flashed as they turned in air  
 Sab'ring the gunners there,  
 Charging an army, while 30  
 All the world wondered.  
 Plunged in the battery-smoke  
 Right through the line they broke;

<sup>1</sup>The Dead March in Handel's *Saul* was played by bands as the funeral procession passed through the streets.

<sup>2</sup>Published in December, 1854. The charge occurred in the Battle of Balaclava, 1854, an engagement of the Crimean War.

Cossack and Russian  
 Reeled from the saber-stroke 35  
 Shattered and sundered.  
 Then they rode back, but not,  
 Not the six hundred.

## V

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them; 40  
 Cannon behind them  
 Volleyed and thundered;  
 Stormed at with shot and shell,  
 While horse and hero fell,  
 They that had fought so well 45  
 Came through the jaws of Death,  
 Back from the mouth of hell,  
 All that was left of them,  
 Left of six hundred.

## VI

When can their glory fade? 50  
 O the wild charge they made!  
 All the world wondered.  
 Honor the charge they made!  
 Honor the Light Brigade,  
 Noble six hundred! 55

## COME INTO THE GARDEN<sup>1</sup>

## I

Come into the garden, Maud,  
 For the black bat, night, has flown,  
 Come into the garden, Maud,  
 I am here at the gate alone;  
 And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad, 5  
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

## II

For a breeze of morning moves,  
 And the planet of Love is on high,  
 Beginning to faint in the light that she loves  
 On a bed of daffodil sky, 10  
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,  
 To faint in his light, and to die.

## III

All night have the roses heard  
 The flute, violin, bassoon;  
 All night has the casement jessamine stirred  
 To the dancers dancing in tune; 16  
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,  
 And a hush with the setting moon.

## IV

I said to the lily, "There is but one,  
 With whom she has heart to be gay. 20  
 When will the dancers leave her alone?  
 She is weary of dance and play."  
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
 And half to the rising day;  
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone 25  
 The last wheel echoes away.

## V

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes  
 In babble and revel and wine.  
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,  
 For one that will never be thine? 30  
 But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,  
 "For ever and ever, mine."

## VI

And the soul of the rose went into my blood  
 As the music clashed in the hall;  
 And long by the garden lake I stood, 35  
 For I heard your rivulet fall  
 From the lake to the meadow and on to the  
 wood,  
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

## VII

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet  
 That whenever a March-wind sighs 40  
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
 In violets blue as your eyes,  
 To the woody hollows in which we meet  
 And the valleys of Paradise.

## VIII

The slender acacia would not shake 45  
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake  
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;  
 But the rose was awake all night for your sake,  
 Knowing your promise to me; 50  
 The lilies and roses were all awake,  
 They sighed for the dawn and thee.

## IX

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,  
 Come hither, the dances are done,  
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls, 55  
 Queen lily and rose in one;  
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,  
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

## X

There has fallen a splendid tear  
 From the passion-flower at the gate. 60  
 She is coming, my dove, my dear;  
 She is coming, my life, my fate.

<sup>1</sup>From *Maud*, published in 1855.



The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near";  
 And the white rose weeps, "She is late";  
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear"; 65  
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

## XI

She is coming, my own, my sweet;  
 Were it ever so airy a tread,  
 My heart would hear her and beat,  
 Were it earth in an earthy bed; 70  
 My dust would hear her and beat,  
 Had I lain for a century dead,  
 Would start and tremble under her feet  
 And blossom in purple and red.

MILTON<sup>1</sup>

## (ALCAICS)

O MIGHTY-MOUTHED inventor of harmonies,  
 O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,  
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
 Milton, a name to resound for ages;  
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel, 5  
 Starred from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,  
 Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean  
 Rings to the roar of an angel onset!  
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,  
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring, 10  
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
 Where some refulgent sunset of India  
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,  
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods  
 Whisper in odorous heights of even. 16

NORTHERN FARMER,  
OLD STYLE<sup>2</sup>

## I

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin'<sup>3</sup>  
 'ere aloän?  
 Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse; whoy, Doc-  
 tor's abeän an' agoän;  
 Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle, but I  
 beänt a fool;  
 Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gawin' to  
 breäk my rule.

## II

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's  
 nawways true; 5  
 Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things  
 that a do.

<sup>1</sup>Published in December, 1863. One of several attempts made by Tennyson to reproduce in English the effect of classical meters.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1864. The dialect is the rustic speech of Lincolnshire, where Tennyson was born and brought up.

<sup>3</sup>Lying.

I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I  
 beän 'ere.  
 An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for  
 foorty year.

## III

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' ere o'  
 my bed.  
 "The Amoighty's a taäkin o' you<sup>4</sup> to 'issén,<sup>5</sup>  
 my friend," a said, 10  
 An' a tow'd ma my sins, an' 's toithe<sup>6</sup> were due,  
 an' I gied it in hond;  
 I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the  
 lond.

## IV

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch  
 to larn.  
 But a cast oop,<sup>7</sup> thot a did, 'bout Bessy  
 Marris's barne.<sup>8</sup>  
 Thaw a knaws I hallus voätet wi' Squoire  
 an' choorch an' staäte, 15  
 An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin  
 the raäte.<sup>9</sup>

## V

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor moy  
 Sally wur deäd,  
 An' 'eärd 'um a bummin'<sup>10</sup> awaäy loike a  
 buzzard-clock<sup>11</sup> ower my 'eäd,  
 An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt  
 'ad summüt to saäy,  
 An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an'  
 I coom'd awaäy. 20

## VI

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she laäid  
 it to meä.  
 Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un,  
 sheä.  
 'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun  
 understond;  
 I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy  
 the lond.

## VII

But Parson a cooms an' a goäs, an' a says  
 it eäsy an' freeä: 25  
 "The Amoighty 's a taäkin o' you to 'issén,  
 my friend," says 'eä.  
 I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun  
 said it in 'aäste;  
 But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a  
 stubb'd<sup>12</sup> Thurnaby waäste.

<sup>4</sup>you as in hour.

<sup>5</sup>Himself.

<sup>6</sup>Tithe.

<sup>7</sup>Confessed.

Child.

<sup>9</sup>Tax for relief of the poor.

<sup>10</sup>Buzzing.

<sup>11</sup>Cockchafer.

<sup>12</sup>Dug out the tree-roots.

## VIII

D' ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, naw,  
tha was not born then;  
Theer wur a boggle<sup>1</sup> in it, I often 'eärd 'um,  
mysén;  
Moäst loike a butter-bump,<sup>2</sup> fur I 'eärd 'um  
about an' about,  
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved  
an' rembled 'um out.<sup>3</sup>

## IX

Keäper's<sup>4</sup> it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer  
a-laäid of 'is faäce  
Down i' the woild 'enemies<sup>5</sup> afoor I coom'd  
to the plaäce.  
Noäks or Thimbleby—toäner<sup>6</sup> 'ed shot 'um  
as deäð as a naäil.  
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize<sup>7</sup>—but  
git ma my aäle.

## X

Dubbut looök at the waäste; theer warn't not  
feeäð for a cow;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz,<sup>8</sup> an' looök  
at it now—  
Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's  
lots o' feeäð,  
Fourscoor yows<sup>9</sup> upon it, an' some on it down  
i' seeäð.<sup>10</sup>

## XI

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a  
stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow  
thruff it an' all,  
If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let  
ma aloän,—  
Meä, wi' haäte hoonderd haäcre o' Squire's,  
an' lond o' my oän.

## XII

Do Godamoighty know what a 's doing  
a-taäkin' o' meä?  
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a  
peä;  
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a' dear,  
a' dear!  
And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michael-  
mas thutty year.

<sup>1</sup>Goblin.<sup>2</sup>Bittern.<sup>3</sup>Tore him up and threw him out.<sup>4</sup>I. e., it was the ghost of the game-keeper.<sup>5</sup>Anemones.<sup>6</sup>One or the other.<sup>7</sup>The assizes.<sup>8</sup>Furze.<sup>9</sup>Ewes.<sup>10</sup>Clover.

## XIII

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant not a  
'aäpoth<sup>11</sup> o' sense,  
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins—a niver  
mended a fence;  
But Godamoighty a moost taäke meä an'  
taäke ma now,  
Wi' aäð the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby  
hoälm's<sup>12</sup> to plow!

## XIV

Looök 'ow quoloty<sup>13</sup> smoiles when they seeäs  
ma a passin' boy,  
Says to thessén,<sup>14</sup> naw doubt, "What a man a  
beä sewer-loyl!"<sup>15</sup>  
Fur they knaws what I beän to Squire sin'  
fust a coom'd to the 'All;  
I done moy duty by Squire an' I done moy  
duty boy hall.

## XV

Squire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons  
'ull 'a to wroite,  
For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä thot  
muddles ma quoit;  
Sartin-sewer I beä thot a weänt niver give it  
to Joänes,  
Naw, nor a moänt to Robins—a niver rem-  
bles the stoäns.

## XVI

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi'  
'is kittle o' steäm<sup>16</sup>  
Huzzin' an' maäzin'<sup>17</sup> the blessed feälds wi'  
the devil's oän teäm.  
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they  
says is sweet,  
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn  
abeär to see it.

## XVII

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn  
bring ma the aäle?  
Doctor's a 'toättler,<sup>18</sup> lass, an a's hallus i' the  
owd taäle;  
I weänt bräk rules fur Doctor, a knaws  
naw moor nor a floy;  
Git ma my aäle, I tell tha, an' if I mun doy  
I mun doy.

<sup>11</sup>Halfpennyworth.<sup>12</sup>Holms, flat land near a river.<sup>13</sup>The gentry (quality).<sup>14</sup>Themselves.<sup>15</sup>Surely<sup>16</sup>Steam-engine.<sup>17</sup>Buzzing and amazing.<sup>18</sup>Teetotaler.<sup>19</sup>He is always at the old story.

IDYLS OF THE KING<sup>1</sup>

## THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere,  
First made and latest left of all the knights,  
Told, when the man was no more than a voice  
In the white winter of his age, to those 4  
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds.

For on their march to westward, Bedivere,  
Who slowly paced among the slumbering host,  
Heard in his tent the moanings of the King:

"I found Him in the shining of the stars,  
I marked Him in the flowering of His fields, 10  
But in His ways with men I find Him not.  
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.  
O me! for why is all around us here  
As if some lesser god had made the world,  
But had not force to shape it as he would, 15  
Till the High God behold it from beyond,  
And enter it, and make it beautiful?  
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,  
But that these eyes of men are dense and dim,  
And have not power to see it as it is— 20  
Perchance, because we see not to the close;—  
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,  
And have but stricken with the sword in vain,  
And all whereon I leaned in wife and friend  
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm 25  
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.  
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death!  
Nay—God my Christ—I pass but shall not  
die."

Then, ere that last weird battle in the  
west, 29  
There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain killed  
In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain blown  
Along a wandering wind, and past his ear  
Went shrilling: "Hollow, hollow all delight!  
Hail, King! to-morrow thou shalt pass away.  
Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee. 35  
And I am blown along a wandering wind,  
And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight!"  
And fainter onward, like wild birds that  
change

<sup>1</sup>The *Idyls of the King* are twelve in number. In 1859 four were published: "Enid" (in 1884 divided into two Idyls, which in 1888 were finally entitled "The Marriage of Geraint" and "Geraint and Enid"), "Merlin and Vivien," "Lancelot and Elaine," and "Guinevere." In 1869 four more were published: "The Coming of Arthur," "The Holy Grail," "Pelleas and Ettarre," and "The Passing of Arthur." In the last-named Idyl Tennyson incorporated his *Morte d'Arthur* which had been published in 1842 and had been written by 1835. In 1871 "The Last Tournament" was published, in 1872 "Gareth and Lynette," and in 1885 "Balin and Balan," which completed the series. "The Passing of Arthur" is the last of the Idyls as finally arranged, and is based on the narrative in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, Bk. XXI.

Their season in the night and wail their way  
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the  
dream

Shrilled; but in going mingled with dim cries 40  
Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,  
As of some lonely city sacked by night,  
When all is lost, and wife and child with wail  
Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and called:  
"Who spake? A dream. O, light upon the  
wind, 46

Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are these dim  
cries

Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste and  
wild

Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake:  
"O me, my King, let pass whatever will, 51  
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;  
But in their stead thy name and glory cling  
To all high places like a golden cloud  
For ever; but as yet thou shalt not pass. 55  
Light was Gawain in life, and light in death  
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;  
And care not thou for dreams from him, but  
rise—

I hear the steps of Modred in the west,  
And with him many of thy people, and  
knights 60

Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser  
grown

Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.  
Right well in heart they know thee for the  
King.

Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere: 65  
"Far other is this battle in the west  
Whereto we move than when we strove in  
youth,  
And brake the petty kings, and fought with  
Rome,  
Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,  
And shook him through the north. Ill doom  
is mine 70

To war against my people and my knights.  
The king who fights his people fights himself.  
And they my knights, who loved me once, the  
stroke

That strikes them dead is as my death to me.  
Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way 75  
Through this blind haze which, ever since I  
saw

One lying in the dust at Almesbury,  
Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the King and moved his host by  
night,  
And ever pushed Sir Modred, league by  
league, 80



Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse<sup>1</sup>—  
 A land of old upheaven from the abyss  
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again;  
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,  
 And the long mountains ended in a coast 85  
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away  
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.  
 There the pursuer could pursue no more,  
 And he that fled no further fly the King;  
 And there, that day when the great light of  
 heaven 90  
 Burned at his lowest in the rolling year,  
 On the waste sand by the waste sea they  
 closed.  
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight  
 Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.  
 A death-white mist slept over sand and sea, 95  
 Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it,  
 drew  
 Down with his blood, till all his heart was  
 cold  
 With formless fear; and even on Arthur fell  
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.  
 For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,  
 And friend slew friend not knowing whom he  
 slew; 101  
 And some had visions out of golden youth,  
 And some beheld the faces of old ghosts  
 Look in upon the battle; and in the mist  
 Was many a noble deed, many a base, 105  
 And chance and craft and strength in single  
 fights,  
 And ever and anon with host to host  
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard  
 mail hewn,  
 Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the  
 crash 109  
 Of battle-axes on shattered helms, and shrieks  
 After the Christ, of those who falling down  
 Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist;  
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,  
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphem-  
 ies,  
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the  
 lungs 115  
 In that close mist, and cryings for the light,  
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one death-bed after wall  
 Of suffering, silence follows, or through death  
 Or death-like swoon, thus over all that shore,  
 Save for some whisper of the seething seas,  
 A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous  
 day 122  
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came  
 A bitter wind, clear from the north, and blew  
 The mist aside, and with that wind the tide

Rose, and the pale King glanced across the  
 field 126  
 Of battle. But no man was moving there;  
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,  
 Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave  
 Brake in among dead faces, to and fro 130  
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down  
 Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,  
 And shivered brands that once had fought  
 with Rome,  
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores  
 The voice of days of old and days to be. 135

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,  
 And whiter than the mist that all day long  
 Had held the field of battle was the King:

“Hearest thou this great voice that shakes  
 the world,  
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon we  
 move, 140  
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,  
 My dead, as though they had not died for  
 me?—  
 O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fallen  
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,  
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be king; 14  
 Behold, I seem but king among the dead.”

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere: “My  
 king!  
 King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,  
 There also will I worship thee as king.  
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live 150  
 Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that  
 brought  
 The heathen back among us, yonder stands,  
 Modred, unharmed, the traitor of thine  
 house.”

Then spake the King: “My house hath  
 been my doom.  
 But call not thou this traitor of my house 155  
 Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with  
 me.  
 My house are rather they who swear my  
 vows,  
 Yea, even while they brake them, owned me  
 king.  
 And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,  
 When all the purport of my throne hath  
 failed, 160  
 That quick or dead thou holdest me for king.  
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry;  
 And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see  
 Yet, ere I pass.” And uttering this the King  
 Made at the man. Then Modred smote his  
 liege 165  
 Hard on that helm which many a heathen  
 sword

<sup>1</sup>Supposed to have been a country (now covered by the sea)  
 uniting the Scilly Islands with western Cornwall.

Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one blow,  
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,  
Slew him, and, all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled 170  
Among the mountains by the winter sea,  
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,  
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their lord,  
King Arthur; then, because his wound was  
deep,  
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him, 175  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.  
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was full. 180

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
Whereof this world holds record. Such a  
sleep  
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that  
we 185

Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,  
Walking about the gardens and the halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made,— 190  
Though Merlin sware that I should come  
again

To rule once more—but let what will be be,  
I am so deeply smitten through the helm  
That without help I cannot last till morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur, 195  
Which was my pride; for thou rememberest  
how

In those old days, one summer noon, an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed in white samite,<sup>1</sup> mystic, wonderful,  
Holding the sword—and how I rowed across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a king; 201  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known.  
But now delay not; take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle mere;<sup>2</sup> 205  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me  
word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,  
Aidless, alone, and smitten through the  
helm—  
A little thing may harm a wounded man; 210  
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee  
word."

So saying, from the ruined shrine he stepped,  
And in the moon athwart<sup>3</sup> the place of tombs,  
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,  
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang  
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, step-  
ping down 217  
By zigzag paths and juts of pointed rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,  
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,  
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran  
forth  
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt;  
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,  
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work 225  
Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,  
This way and that dividing the swift mind,  
In act to throw; but at the last it seemed  
Better to leave Excalibur concealed 230  
There in the many-knotted water-flags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.  
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
"Hast thou performed my mission which I  
gave? 235  
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast  
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and  
pale: 240  
"Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy  
name,  
Not rendering true answer, as beseemed  
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight;  
For surer sign had followed, either hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere. 245  
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing  
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me  
word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time 250  
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,  
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;  
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,  
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote  
His palms together, and he cried aloud: 255

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,  
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

<sup>1</sup>Heavy silk cloth, generally interwoven with gold.

<sup>2</sup>Lake—the "great water" mentioned above.

<sup>3</sup>Across.

Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,  
Which might have pleased the eyes of many  
men.

What good should follow this, if this were  
done? 260

What harm, undone? Deep harm to dis-  
obey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand  
An act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record or what relic of my lord 266

Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt? But were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms, 270

Saying: 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely Maiden of the Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.' 274

So might some old man speak in the aftertime  
To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honor and much fame were  
lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,<sup>1</sup>

And hid Excalibur the second time, 279

And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast  
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds." 285

To whom replied King Arthur, much in  
wrath:

"Ah miserable, and unkind, untrue,

Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king,

Laid widowed of the power in his eye 290

That bowed the will. I see thee what thou  
art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all,

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl 295

Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,

And the third time may prosper, get thee  
hence;

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,

I will arise and slay thee with my hands." 300

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,  
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

Among the bulrush beds, and clutched the  
sword,

And strongly wheeled and threw it. The great  
brand 304

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,  
And flashing round and round, and whirled

in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.

So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur; 310

But ere he dipped the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandished  
him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere.

And lightly went the other to the King. 315

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker  
breath:

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.  
Speak out; what is it thou hast heard, or  
seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw, 321

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not though I live three lives of mortal men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling  
him; 325

But when I looked again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandished  
him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing  
hard: 330

"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were  
gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my  
weight,

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear

My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm, 336

And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere

Remorsefully regarded through his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found not  
words; 340

Then took with care, and kneeling on one  
knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid  
hands,

And rising bore him through the place of  
tombs.

<sup>1</sup>Fancy.



But, as he walked, King Arthur panted  
 hard,  
 Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed 345  
 When all the house is mute. So sighed the  
 King,  
 Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick,  
 quick!  
 I fear it is too late, and I shall die."  
 But the other swiftly strode from ridge to  
 ridge,  
 Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he  
 walked, 350  
 Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
 He heard the deep behind him, and a cry  
 Before. His own thought drove him like a  
 goad.  
 Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves  
 And barren chasms, and all to left and right  
 The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he  
 based 356  
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—  
 And on a sudden, lo, the level lake,  
 And the long glories of the winter moon! 360

Then saw they how there hove a dusky  
 barge,  
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,  
 Beneath them; and descending they were  
 ware  
 That all the decks were dense with stately  
 forms,  
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—  
 by these 365  
 Three queens with crowns of gold—and from  
 them rose  
 A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,  
 And, as it were one voice, an agony  
 Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills 369  
 All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
 Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmured Arthur, "Place me in the  
 barge."  
 So to the barge they came. There those three  
 queens  
 Put forth their hands, and took the King, and  
 wept.  
 But she that rose the tallest of them all 375  
 And fairest laid his head upon her lap,  
 And loosed the shattered casque,<sup>1</sup> and chafed  
 his hands,  
 And called him by his name, complaining  
 loud,  
 And dropping bitter tears against a brow  
 Striped with dark blood; for all his face was  
 white 380  
 And colorless, and like the withered moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;  
 And all his greaves and cuisses<sup>2</sup> dashed with  
 drops  
 Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—  
 That made his forehead like a rising sun 385  
 High from the dais-throne—were parched with  
 dust,  
 Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
 Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed  
 his lips.  
 So like a shattered column lay the King; 389  
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
 Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged  
 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:  
 "Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go? 395  
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?  
 For now I see the true old times are dead,  
 When every morning brought a noble chance,  
 And every chance brought out a noble knight.  
 Such times have been not since the light that  
 led 400

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.<sup>3</sup>  
 But now the whole Round Table is dissolved  
 Which was an image of the mighty world;<sup>4</sup>  
 And I, the last, go forth companionless, 404  
 And the days darken round me, and the years,  
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the  
 barge:  
 "The old order changeth, yielding place to  
 new,  
 And God fulfills himself in many ways,  
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the  
 world. 410  
 Comfort thyself; what comfort is in me?  
 I have lived my life, and that which I have  
 done  
 May He within himself make pure! but thou,  
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought  
 by prayer 415  
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let  
 thy voice  
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
 For what are men better than sheep or goats  
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of  
 prayer 420  
 Both for themselves and those who call them  
 friend?  
 For so the whole round earth is every way  
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

<sup>2</sup>Armor for the leg below the knee, and armor for the thigh.

<sup>3</sup>See St. Matthew, ii, 11.

<sup>4</sup>According to Malory, "Merlin made the Round Table in tokening of the roundness of the world."

<sup>1</sup>Helmet.

But now farewell. I am going a long way  
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go—<sup>425</sup>  
 For all my mind is clouded with a doubt—  
 To the island-valley of Avilion;<sup>1</sup>  
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies  
 Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard  
 lawns <sup>430</sup>  
 And bowery hollows crowned with summer  
 sea,  
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.”

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted  
 swan  
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death, <sup>435</sup>  
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the  
 flood  
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
 Revolving many memories, till the hull  
 Looked one black dot against the verge of  
 dawn,  
 And on the mere the wailing died away. <sup>440</sup>

But when that moan had passed for ever-  
 more,  
 The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn  
 Amazed him, and he groaned, “The King is  
 gone.”  
 And therewithal came on him the weird  
 rime,  
 “From the great deep to the great deep he  
 goes.”<sup>2</sup> <sup>445</sup>

Whereat he slowly turned and slowly clomb  
 The last hard footstep of that iron crag,  
 Thence marked the black hull moving yet, and  
 cried:

“He passes to be king among the dead,  
 And after healing of his grievous wound <sup>450</sup>  
 He comes again; but—if he come no more—  
 O me, be yon dark queens in yon black boat,  
 Who shrieked and wailed, the three whereat  
 we gazed  
 On that high day, when, clothed with living  
 light,  
 They stood before his throne in silence,  
 friends <sup>455</sup>  
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?”

Then from the dawn it seemed there came,  
 but faint  
 As from beyond the limit of the world,  
 Like the last echo born of a great cry,  
 Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice <sup>460</sup>  
 Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and  
 clomb  
 Even to the highest he could climb, and saw,  
 Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,  
 Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the  
 King, <sup>465</sup>  
 Down that long water opening on the deep  
 Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go  
 From less to less and vanish into light.  
 And the new sun rose bringing the new year.

### THE HIGHER PAN- THEISM<sup>3</sup>

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the  
 hills and the plains,—  
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who  
 reigns?

Is not the Vision He, though He be not that  
 which He seems?  
 Dreams are true while they last, and do we  
 not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body  
 and limb, <sup>45</sup>  
 Are they not sign and symbol of thy division  
 from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the  
 reason why,  
 For is He not all but thou, that hast power to  
 feel “I am I”?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou  
 fulfillest thy doom,  
 Making Him broken gleams and a stifled  
 splendor and gloom. <sup>10</sup>

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit  
 with Spirit can meet—  
 Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than  
 hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us  
 rejoice,  
 For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet  
 His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all, says the  
 fool, <sup>15</sup>  
 For all we have power to see is a straight staff  
 bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye  
 of man cannot see;  
 But if we could see and hear, this Vision—  
 were it not He?

<sup>1</sup>Avalon, home of spirits of the departed.

<sup>2</sup>Merlin's song when Arthur was born.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1869.

## FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL<sup>1</sup>

FLOWER in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but *if* I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all, <sup>5</sup>  
I should know what God and man is.

## THE REVENGE<sup>2</sup>

### A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

#### I

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,  
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came  
flying from far away:  
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have  
sighted fifty-three!"  
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore  
God I am no coward;  
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships  
are out of gear, <sup>5</sup>  
And the half my men are sick. I must fly,  
but follow quick.  
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with  
fifty-three?"

#### II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know  
you are no coward;  
You fly them for a moment to fight with them  
again.  
But I've ninety men and more that are lying  
sick ashore. <sup>10</sup>  
I should count myself the coward if I left  
them, my Lord Howard,  
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms  
of Spain."

#### III

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships  
of war that day,  
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer  
heaven;  
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men  
from the land <sup>15</sup>  
Very carefully and slow,  
Men of Bideford in Devon,  
And we laid them on the ballast down below;  
For we brought them all aboard,

And they blessed him in their pain, that they  
were not left to Spain, <sup>20</sup>  
To the thumb-screw and the stake, for the  
glory of the Lord.

#### IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the  
ship and to fight,  
And he sailed away from Flores till the Span-  
iard came in sight,  
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the  
weather bow.  
"Shall we fight or shall we fly? <sup>25</sup>  
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,  
For to fight is but to die!  
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun  
be set."  
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good  
English men.  
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children  
of the devil, <sup>30</sup>  
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil  
yet."

#### V

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we  
roared a hurrah, and so  
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart  
of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her  
ninety sick below;  
For half of their fleet to the right and half to  
the left were seen, <sup>35</sup>  
And the little *Revenge* ran on through the long  
sea-lane between.

#### VI

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from  
their decks and laughed,  
Thousands of their seamen made mock at  
the mad little craft  
Running on and on, till delayed  
By their mountain-like *San Philip* that, of  
fifteen hundred tons, <sup>40</sup>  
And up-shadowing high above us with her  
yawning tiers of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

#### VII

And while now the great *San Philip* hung  
above us like a cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud, <sup>45</sup>  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day,  
And two upon the larboard and two upon the  
starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1860.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1878. According to Sir Walter Raleigh—whose account of the fight is the basis of Tennyson's poem—the engagement took place on the afternoon of 10 September, 1591. The English fleet, under the command of Howard, had sailed to the Azores to intercept Spanish treasure-ships on their way from America.



## VIII

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought  
 herself and went, 50  
 Having that within her womb that had left  
 her ill content;  
 And the rest they came aboard us, and they  
 fought us hand to hand,  
 For a dozen times they came with their pikes  
 and musketeers,  
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog  
 that shakes his ears  
 When he leaps from the water to the land. 55

## IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came  
 out far over the summer sea,  
 But never a moment ceased the fight of the  
 one and the fifty-three.  
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, their  
 high-built galleons came,  
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her  
 battle-thunder and flame;  
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew  
 back with her dead and her shame. 60  
 For some were sunk and many were shattered,  
 and so could fight us no more—  
 God of battles, was ever a battle like this in  
 the world before?

## X

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"  
 Though his vessel was all but a wreck;  
 And it chanced that, when half of the short  
 summer night was gone, 65  
 With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left  
 the deck,  
 But a bullet struck him that was dressing it  
 suddenly dead,  
 And himself he was wounded again in the side  
 and the head,  
 And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

## XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled  
 out far over the summer sea, 70  
 And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay  
 round us all in a ring;  
 But they dared not touch us again, for they  
 feared that we still could sting,  
 So they watched what the end would be.  
 And we had not fought them in vain,  
 But in perilous plight were we, 75  
 Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,  
 And half of the rest of us maimed for life  
 In the crash of the cannonades and the  
 desperate strife;  
 And the sick men down in the hold were most  
 of them stark and cold,

And the pikes were all broken or bent, and  
 the powder was all of it spent; 80  
 And the masts and the rigging were lying  
 over the side;  
 But Sir Richard cried in his English pride:  
 "We have fought such a fight for a day and  
 a night  
 As may never be fought again!  
 We have won great glory, my men! 85  
 And a day less or more  
 At sea or ashore,  
 We die—does it matter when?  
 Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her,  
 split her in twain!  
 Fall into the hands of God, not into the  
 hands of Spain!" 90

## XII

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the sea-  
 men made reply:  
 "We have children, we have wives,  
 And the Lord hath spared our lives.  
 We will make the Spaniard promise, if we  
 yield, to let us go;  
 We shall live to fight again and to strike  
 another blow." 95  
 And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded  
 to the foe.

## XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship  
 bore him then,  
 Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir  
 Richard caught at last,  
 And they praised him to his face with their  
 courtly foreign grace;  
 But he rose upon their decks, and he cried: 100  
 "I have fought for Queen and Faith like a  
 valiant man and true;  
 I have only done my duty as a man is bound  
 to do.  
 With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville  
 die!"  
 And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

## XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so  
 valiant and true, 105  
 And had holden the power and glory of Spain  
 so cheap  
 That he dared her with one little ship and his  
 English few;  
 Was he devil or man? He was devil for  
 aught they knew,  
 But they sank his body with honor down into  
 the deep,  
 And they manned the *Revenge* with a swarthier  
 alien crew, 110

And away she sailed with her loss and longed  
for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had ruined  
awoke from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the weather  
to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great gale  
blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an  
earthquake grew, <sup>115</sup>  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and  
their masts and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the  
shot-shattered navy of Spain,  
And the little *Revenge* herself went down by  
the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

RIZPAH<sup>1</sup>

17—

## I

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land  
and sea—  
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother,  
come out to me!"  
Why should he call me to-night, when he  
knows that I cannot go?  
For the downs are as bright as day, and the  
full moon stares at the snow.

## II

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy  
us out of the town. <sup>5</sup>  
The loud black nights for us, and the storm  
rushing over the down,  
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led  
by the creak of the chain,  
And grovel and grope for my son till I find  
myself drenched with the rain.

## III

Anything fallen again? nay—what was there  
left to fall?  
I have taken them home, I have numbered  
the bones, I have hidden them all. <sup>10</sup>  
What am I saying? and what are *you*? do you  
come as a spy?  
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree  
falls so must it lie.

## IV

Who let her in? how long has she been?  
you—what have you heard?

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1880. The poem is founded on an incident read by Tennyson in a penny magazine (see the *Memoir* by Hallam Tennyson, II, 249-251). As the numerals under the title indicate, the time of the story is the eighteenth century. For the source of the title see 2 Samuel, xxi, 1-14.

Why did you sit so quiet? you never have  
spoken a word.  
O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of  
their spies— <sup>15</sup>  
But the night has crept into my heart, and  
begun to darken my eyes.

## V

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should  
*you* know of the night,  
The blast and the burning shame and the  
bitter frost and the fright?  
I have done it, while you were asleep—you  
were only made for the day.  
I have gathered my baby together—and now  
you may go your way. <sup>20</sup>

## VI

Nay—for it's kind of you, madam, to sit by  
an old dying wife.  
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only  
an hour of life.  
I kissed my boy in the prison, before he went  
out to die.  
"They dared me to do it," he said, and he  
never has told me a lie.  
I whipped him for robbing an orchard once  
when he was but a child— <sup>25</sup>  
"The farmer dared me to do it," he said; he  
was always so wild—  
And idle—and couldn't be idle—my Willy—  
he never could rest.  
The King should have made him a soldier,  
he would have been one of his best.

## VII

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and  
they never would let him be good;  
They swore that he dare not rob the mail,<sup>2</sup>  
and he swore that he would; <sup>30</sup>  
And he took no life, but he took one purse,  
and when all was done  
He flung it among his fellows—"I'll none of  
it," said my son.

## VIII

I came into court to the judge and the lawyers.  
I told them my tale,  
God's own truth—but they killed him, they  
killed him for robbing the mail.  
They hanged him in chains for a show—we  
had always borne a good name— <sup>35</sup>  
To be hanged for a thief—and then put away  
—isn't that enough shame?  
Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but  
they set him so high  
That all the ships of the world could stare at  
him, passing by.

<sup>2</sup>Mail-coach.

God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and  
horrible fowls of the air,  
But not the black heart of the lawyer who  
killed him and hanged him there. 40

## IX

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid  
him my last good-bye:  
They had fastened the door of his cell. "O  
mother!" I heard him cry.  
I couldn't get back though I tried, he had  
something further to say,  
And now I never shall know it. The jailer  
forced me away.

## X

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of  
my boy that was dead, 45  
They seized me and shut me up: they fastened  
me down on my bed.  
"Mother, O mother!"—he called in the dark  
to me year after year—  
They beat me for that, they beat me—you  
know that I couldn't but hear;  
And then at the last they found I had grown  
so stupid and still  
They let me abroad again—but the creatures  
had worked their will. 50

## XI

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my  
bone was left—  
I stole them all from the lawyers—and you,  
will you call it a theft?—  
My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the  
bones that had laughed and had cried—  
Theirs? O, no! they are mine—not theirs  
—they had moved in my side.

## XII

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I  
kissed 'em, I buried 'em all— 55  
I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night by  
the churchyard wall.  
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet  
of judgment 'ill sound,  
But I charge you never to say that I laid him  
in holy ground.

## XIII

They would scratch him up—they would hang  
him again on the curséd tree.  
Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know—let all  
that be, 60  
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good-  
will toward men—  
"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"  
—let me hear it again;

"Full of compassion and mercy—long-  
suffering." Yes, O, yes!  
For the lawyer is born but to murder—the  
Savior lives but to bless.  
He'll never put on the black cap except for  
the worst of the worst,<sup>1</sup> 65  
And the first may be last—I have heard it in  
church—and the last may be first.  
Suffering—O, long-suffering—yes, as the  
Lord must know,  
Year after year in the mist and the wind and  
the shower and the snow.

## XIV

Heard, have you? what? they have told  
you he never repented his sin.  
How do they know it? are *they* his mother?  
are *you* of his kin? 70  
Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm  
on the downs began,  
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the sea  
that 'ill moan like a man?

## XV

Election, Election, and Reprobation<sup>2</sup>—it's  
all very well.  
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not  
find him in hell.  
For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord  
has looked into my care, 75  
And He means me I'm sure to be happy with  
Willy, I know not where.

## XVI

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul, that is  
all your desire—  
Do you think I care for *my* soul if my boy be  
gone to the fire?  
I have been with God in the dark—go, go,  
you may leave me alone—  
You never have borne a child—you are just  
as hard as a stone. 80

## XVII

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that  
you mean to be kind,  
But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's  
voice in the wind—  
The snow and the sky so bright—he used but  
to call in the dark,  
And he calls to me now from the church and  
not from the gibbet—for hark!  
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is coming  
—shaking the walls— 85  
Willy—the moon's in a cloud—Good-night.  
I am going. He calls.

<sup>1</sup>In English courts the judge puts on a black cap before giving a sentence of death.

<sup>2</sup>Terms associated with the Calvinistic doctrines of grace and foreordination.



TO VIRGIL<sup>1</sup>

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH

## I

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest  
Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,  
Ilion falling, Rome arising,  
wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre;

## II

Landscape-lover, lord of language  
more than he that sang the "Works and  
Days,"<sup>2</sup>  
All the chosen coin of fancy  
flashing out from many a golden  
phrase;

## III

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,  
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and  
herd; 5  
All the charm of all the Muses  
often flowering in a lonely word;

## IV

Poet of the happy Tityrus<sup>3</sup>  
piping underneath his beechen bowers;  
Poet of the poet-satyr<sup>4</sup>  
whom the laughing shepherd bound  
with flowers;

## V

Chanter of the Pollio,<sup>5</sup> glorying  
in the blissful years again to be,  
Summers of the snakeless meadow,  
unlaborious earth and quiet sea; 10

## VI

Thou that seest Universal  
Nature moved by Universal Mind;<sup>6</sup>  
Thou majestic in thy sadness  
at the doubtful doom of human kind;

## VII

Light among the vanished ages;  
star that gildest yet this phantom  
shore;

Golden branch amid the shadows,<sup>7</sup>  
kings and realms that pass to rise no  
more;

## VIII

Now thy Forum roars no longer,  
fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—<sup>15</sup>  
Though thine ocean-roll of rhythm  
sound for ever of Imperial Rome—

## IX

Now the Rome of slaves hath perished,  
and the Rome of freemen holds her  
place,  
I, from out the Northern Island  
sundered once from all the human  
race,<sup>8</sup>

## X

I salute thee, Mantovano,<sup>9</sup>  
I that loved thee since my day began,  
Wielder of the stateliest measure  
ever molded by the lips of man. 20

CROSSING THE BAR<sup>10</sup>

SUNSET and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep, 5  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless  
deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark! 10  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;

For though from out our bourn of Time and  
Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face 15  
When I have crossed the bar.

<sup>1</sup>Published in November, 1882.

<sup>2</sup>Hesiod.

<sup>3</sup>A shepherd in Virgil's first Eclogue.

<sup>4</sup>Silenus, *Eclogue* VI.

<sup>5</sup>*Eclogue* IV.

<sup>6</sup>See *Æneid*, VI, 727.

<sup>7</sup>See *Æneid*, VI, 208.

<sup>8</sup>See *Eclogue* I, 67.

<sup>9</sup>*I.e.*, Mantuan. Virgil was born at Mantua.

<sup>10</sup>Published in 1889. Tennyson wished this poem to be placed at the end of all editions of his poems.

## ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889)

Browning's father was a clerk in the Bank of England who lived in Camberwell, a suburb of London in the early nineteenth century. He was a man in easy circumstances and of unusual culture, interested in art, in music, and in literature. He had a good collection of pictures and a large library containing many curious and out-of-the-way books. In Camberwell Browning was born on 7 May, 1812. His education was almost entirely derived from his parents and the influences of his home. Occasionally he attended nearby schools and occasionally, when he made it plain that conventional methods of education were not for him, he had a private tutor at home, but his formal training was decidedly irregular. He was enrolled in the University of London, but spent only a short time in university studies and made no attempt to take a degree. All this does not mean that Browning was an idle and ignorant youth; on the contrary, he was very early a man of wide and curious learning, with a cultivated taste in both painting and music. But it means that what he learned came from the influences of his home, from the encouragement of his parents, from reading in his father's library, and from the cultivated friends of his family. Browning early began the writing of verse and early fell under the influence of Shelley. His first published poem, *Pauline*, published in 1833 when he was twenty-one, shows this influence strongly. *Pauline* made no impression on the public, but Browning's next poem, *Paracelsus*, published in 1835, while it attracted only a few readers, gained for its author the attention or friendship of a number of men of letters. Among these were Wordsworth, Landor, Leigh Hunt, and Dickens. *Paracelsus* also attracted the attention of the actor-manager Macready, and led him to ask Browning for a play. As a result Browning wrote *Strafford*, which was acted at the Covent Garden Theater in 1837 and published in the same year. Browning had dramatic genius, as was evident from *Paracelsus*, and it was natural both for him and for Macready to suppose that he could succeed with plays, yet it is unfortunate that he was led to expend as much time as he did on the effort. For *Strafford*, while it was not a complete failure, had only a very qualified success. Nevertheless Browning went on to write other plays, hoping for a better result, producing work which shows powerfully some of the elements of dramatic genius, and yet not writing one play which could hold the stage with complete success. This was true even

of *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* (1843), the best of the half-dozen or more plays he wrote and one which evoked the enthusiastic praise of Dickens. The truth would seem to be that Browning, knowing that he had dramatic genius, did not yet know his limitations, and needed his eight years' trial of play-writing in order to help him to the discovery of the form of poetry which he was soon to make peculiarly his own and in which he did his best work with all his powers in free play. Not all of Browning's time during these years, however, was spent upon "regular" drama. In 1841 he published *Pippa Passes*, a series of dramatic scenes, which contains poetry that can scarcely be overpraised and at least one scene, the incident of Ottima and Sebald, of tremendous power. And in the late eighteen-thirties he had been working on another long poem into which he put the fruit of much study and for the sake of which he had made his first visit to Italy. This poem, however, *Sordello*, published in 1840, was a worse failure than were the plays. Largely because of its obscure style it disappointed Browning's friends and alienated from him for many years the general reading public. But two years later, with the publication of *Dramatic Lyrics*, Browning showed that he was beginning to find his true work, and this and *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics*, published in 1845, contained some of his finest poems.

About this time Browning became acquainted with Elizabeth Barrett, herself a gifted writer of poetry, conducted with her a correspondence which has become famous, finally met her and talked with her, and in 1846 married her despite the violent opposition of her father. Partly on account of Mrs. Browning's delicate health and partly because of difficulties with her father, the Brownings went to Italy and settled in Florence, where they remained until Mrs. Browning's death in 1861. During this period Browning published *Christmas Eve and Easter Day* (1850) and *Men and Women* (1855), the latter volume containing some of the best and most widely liked of all his poems. After Mrs. Browning's death Browning lived no more in Florence. He returned to England and for some years spent much time in London. In 1864 he published *Dramatis Personæ*, and in 1868-1869 his longest work and, in the opinion of many, his greatest, *The Ring and the Book*, a series of poems founded on an account which he had accidentally found of a Roman murder trial. In later years Browning published much, including several translations of Greek plays, but as he grew older

his style grew more difficult and harsh, and a certain waywardness or indifference to the legitimate demands of readers, perhaps always to some extent apparent in his work, increased. The consequence is that much, if not most, of his latest work is inferior to the work of his best years and is no longer widely read. Browning died in his son's house at Venice on 12 December, 1889, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The form of poetry which Browning, as was said above, made peculiarly his own is commonly known as the dramatic monologue—a kind of poem in which some person speaks to another, or to others, self-revealingly, either narrating some incident or telling the story of his life, but in any case laying bare his soul through what he says. This form of poem gave Browning full scope for his dramatic genius without making apparent his

limitations. It enabled him to exercise his dramatic imagination in the creation of a single character and a single scene without calling upon him for a large constructive ability which he did not have. It was the happiest of discoveries for Browning that here was a kind of poem apparently designed expressly for him, and he proceeded to put into it all that he had of rich imagination, deep insight, tender or delicate feeling, and curious learning. He even, when he came to write a long poem, cast *The Ring and the Book* in this form, making it a series of monologues in which the characters of his story and several spectators each tells the story in his own way. This was an extraordinary experiment, bound to result, as it did, in some unevenness of execution and interest, but resulting also in the greatest of his achievements in the dramatic delineation of character.

## CAVALIER TUNES<sup>1</sup>

### I. MARCHING ALONG

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,  
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing:  
And, pressing a troop unable to stoop  
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk  
droop,  
Marched them along, fifty-score strong, 5  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles! Pym and such carles  
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treason-  
ous parles!

Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup, 9  
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup  
Till you're—

CHO.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing  
this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.  
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry<sup>2</sup> as  
well!

England, good cheer! Rupert is near! 15  
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

CHO.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing  
this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his  
snarls  
To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent  
carles! 20

Hold by the right, you double your might;  
So, onward to Nottingham,<sup>3</sup> fresh for the fight,

CHO.—March we along, fifty-score strong,  
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this  
song!

### II. GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?  
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?  
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,  
King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since? 5  
Who raised me the house that sank once?  
Who helped me to gold I spent since?  
Who found me in wine you drank once?

CHO.—King Charles, and who'll do him  
right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for  
fight now? 10

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite  
now,  
King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,  
By the old fool's side that begot him?  
For whom did he cheer and laugh else, 15  
While Noll's<sup>4</sup> damned troopers shot him?

CHO.—King Charles, and who'll do him  
right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for  
fight now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite  
now,  
King Charles! 20

### III. BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!  
Rescue my castle before the hot day  
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.

CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say; 5  
Many's the friend there, will listen and pray

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1842.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Henry Vane the younger.

<sup>3</sup>Here Charles I's standard was raised in 1642.

<sup>4</sup>Cromwell's.



"God's luck to gallants that strike up the  
lay—

CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,  
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads'  
array: 10

Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my  
fay,

CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and  
gay,

Laughs when you talk of surrendering, "Nay!  
I've better counselors; what counsel they?"

CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

### THE LOST LEADER<sup>1</sup>

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,

Just for a riband to stick in his coat—

Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,

Lost all the others she lets us devote;

They, with the gold to give, doled him out  
silver, 5

So much was theirs who so little allowed:

How all our copper had gone for his service!

Rags—were they purple, his heart had been  
proud!

We that had loved him so, followed him,  
honored him,

Lived in his mild and magnificent eye, 10

Learned his great language, caught his clear  
accents,

Made him our pattern to live and to die!

Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,

Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch  
from their graves! 14

He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,

—He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1845. Browning was often asked if Wordsworth was the subject of this poem. The following letter, written to A. B. Grosart on 24 February, 1875, is one of his replies:

"DEAR MR. GROSART,—I have been asked the question you now address me with, and as duly answered it, I can't remember how many times; there is no sort of objection to one more assurance or rather confession, on my part, that I *did* in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about 'handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon.' These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore. But just as in the tapestry on my wall I can recognize figures which have *struck out* a fancy, on occasion, that though truly enough thus derived, yet would be preposterous as a copy, so, though I dare not deny the original of my little poem, I altogether refuse to have it considered as the 'very effigies' of such a moral and intellectual superiority.

"Faithfully yours,  
"ROBERT BROWNING."

We shall march prospering,—not through his  
presence;

Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;  
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his  
quiescence,

Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade  
aspire: 20

Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul  
more,

One task more declined, one more footpath  
untrod,

One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for  
angels,

One wrong more to man, one more insult  
to God!

Life's night begins: let him never come back to  
us! 25

There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,  
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of  
twilight,

Never glad confident morning again!

Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike  
gallantly,

Menace our heart ere we master his own; 30

Then let him receive the new knowledge and  
wait us,

Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

### SOLILOQUY OF THE SPANISH CLOISTER<sup>2</sup>

GR-R-R—there go, my heart's abhorrence!

Water your damned flower-pots, do!

If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,

God's blood, would not mine kill you!

What? your myrtle-bush wants trimming? 5

Oh, that rose has prior claims—

Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?

Hell dry you up with its flames!

At the meal we sit together:

*Salve tibi!*<sup>3</sup> I must hear 10

Wise talk of the kind of weather,

Sort of season, time of year:

*Not a plenteous cork-crop: scarcely*

*Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt:*

*What's the Latin name for "parsley"?* 15

What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,

Laid with care on our own shelf!

With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,

And a goblet for ourself, 20

Rinsed like something sacrificial

Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps—

Marked with L for our initial!

(He-he! There his lily snaps!)

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1842.

<sup>3</sup>Save you! (a salutation).

*Saint*, forsooth! While brown Dolores 25  
Squats outside the Convent bank  
With Sanchicha, telling stories,  
Steeping tresses in the tank,  
Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,  
—Can't I see his dead eye glow, 30  
Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's?  
(That is, if he'd let it show!)

When he finishes refection,  
Knife and fork he never lays  
Cross-wise, to my recollection, 35  
As do I, in Jesu's praise.  
I the Trinity illustrate,  
Drinking watered orange-pulp—  
In three sips the Arian<sup>1</sup> frustrate;  
While he drains his at one gulp. 40

Oh, those melons! If he's able  
We're to have a feast! so nice!  
One goes to the Abbot's table,  
All of us get each a slice.  
How go on your flowers? None double? 45  
Not one fruit-sort can you spy?  
Strange!—And I, too, at such trouble  
Keep them close-nipped on the sly!

There's a great text in Galatians,<sup>2</sup>  
Once you trip on it, entails 50  
Twenty-nine distinct damnations,  
One sure, if another fails:  
If I trip him just a-dying,  
Sure of heaven as sure can be,  
Spin him round and send him flying 55  
Off to hell, a Manichee?<sup>3</sup>

Or, my scrofulous French novel  
On gray paper with blunt type!  
Simply glance at it, you grovel  
Hand and foot in Belial's gripe: 60  
If I double down its pages  
At the woeful sixteenth print,  
When he gathers his greengages,  
Ope a sieve and slip it in't?

Or, there's Satan!—one might venture 65  
Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave  
Such a flaw in the indenture  
As he'd miss till, past retrieve,  
Blasted lay that rose-acacia  
We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine.* . . . 70  
'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratiâ,*  
*Ave, Virgo!*<sup>4</sup> Gr-r-r—you swine!

<sup>1</sup>One who holds with Arius (A. D. 256-336) that Christ is a created being, inferior to God the Father in nature and dignity.

<sup>2</sup>Probably Galatians, iii, 20, which refers to Deuteronomy, xxviii.

<sup>3</sup>Follower of the Persian Manes who maintained the existence of two supreme principles, light (good) and darkness (evil).

<sup>4</sup>Tail. Virgin full of grace!

MY LAST DUCHESS<sup>5</sup>

FERRARA

THAT's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now: Fra Pandolf's<sup>6</sup>  
hands

Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said 5  
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts  
by

The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they  
durst,

How such a glance came there; so, not the  
first

Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't was not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps 15  
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle  
laps

Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat": such  
stuff 19

Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made  
glad,

Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast, 25  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace—all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving  
speech, 30

Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good!  
but thanked

Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill 35  
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your  
will

Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40

Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I  
choose

<sup>5</sup>Published in 1842. Ferrara is a town in northern Italy.

<sup>6</sup>Fra means brother. Pandolf is an imaginary artist—and a monk—of the Renaissance.

Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no  
doubt,  
When'er I passed her; but who passed with-  
out  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave  
commands; 45  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she  
stands  
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll  
meet  
The company below, then. I repeat  
The Count your master's known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretense 50  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, 55  
Which Claus of Innsbruck<sup>1</sup> cast in bronze for  
me!

CRISTINA<sup>2</sup>

SHE should never have looked at me  
If she meant I should not love her!  
There are plenty . . . men, you call such,  
I suppose . . . she may discover  
All her soul to, if she pleases, 5  
And yet leave much as she found them:  
But I'm not so, and she knew it  
When she fixed me, glancing round them.

What? To fix me thus meant nothing?  
But I can't tell (there's my weakness) 10  
What her look said!—no vile cant, sure,  
About "need to strew the bleakness  
Of some lone shore with its pearl-seed,  
That the sea feels"—no "strange yearning  
That such souls have, most to lavish 15  
Where there's chance of least returning."

Oh, we're sunk enough here, God knows!  
But not quite so sunk that moments,  
Sure though seldom, are denied us,  
When the spirit's true endowments 20  
Stand out plainly from its false ones,  
And apprise it if pursuing  
Or the right way or the wrong way,  
To its triumph or undoing.

There are flashes struck from midnights, 25  
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,  
Whereby piled-up honors perish,  
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,

<sup>1</sup>Like Pandolf, an imaginary artist.<sup>2</sup>Published in 1842. The title was suggested by Maria Christina of Naples (1806-1878) who married King Ferdinand VII of Spain in 1829. She was a coquette and lived a dissolute life.

While just this or that poor impulse,  
Which for once had play unstified, 30  
Seems the sole work of a lifetime,  
That away the rest have trifled.

Doubt you if, in some such moment,  
As she fixed me, she felt clearly,  
Ages past the soul existed, 35  
Here an age 'tis resting merely,  
And hence fleets again for ages,  
While the true end, sole and single,  
It stops here for is, this love-way,  
With some other soul to mingle? 40

Else it loses what it lived for,  
And eternally must lose it;  
Better ends may be in prospect,  
Deeper blisses (if you choose it),  
But this life's end and this love-bliss 45  
Have been lost here. Doubt you whether  
This she felt as, looking at me,  
Mine and her souls rushed together?

Oh, observe! Of course, next moment,  
The world's honors, in derision, 50  
Trampled out the light for ever:  
Never fear but there's provision  
Of the devil's to quench knowledge  
Lest we walk the earth in rapture!  
—Making those who catch God's secret 55  
Just so much more prize their capture!

Such am I: the secret's mine now!  
She has lost me, I have gained her;  
Her soul's mine: and thus, grown perfect,  
I shall pass my life's remainder. 60  
Life will just hold out the proving  
Both our powers, alone and blended:  
And then, come the next life quickly!  
This world's use will have been ended.

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS<sup>3</sup>

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening  
smiles  
Miles and miles  
On the solitary pastures where our sheep  
Half-asleep  
Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray  
or stop 5  
As they crop—  
Was the site once of a city great and gay,  
(So they say)  
Of our country's very capital, its prince  
Ages since 10  
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding  
far  
Peace or war.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1855.



Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,  
 As you see,  
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills  
 From the hills 16  
 Intersect and give a name to (else they run  
 Into one),  
 Where the domed and daring palace shot its  
 spires  
 Up like fires 20  
 O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall  
 Bounding all,  
 Made of marble, men might march on nor be  
 pressed,  
 Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass  
 Never was! 26  
 Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-  
 spreads  
 And embeds  
 Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,  
 Stock or stone— 30  
 Where a multitude of men breathed joy and  
 woe  
 Long ago;  
 Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of  
 shame  
 Struck them tame;  
 And that glory and that shame alike, the gold  
 Bought and sold. 36

Now,—the single little turret that remains  
 On the plains,  
 By the caper overrooted, by the gourd  
 Overscored, 40  
 While the patching houseleek's head of blos-  
 som winks  
 Through the chinks—  
 Marks the basement whence a tower in  
 ancient time  
 Sprang sublime,  
 And a burning ring, all round, the chariots  
 traced 45  
 As they raced,  
 And the monarch and his minions and his  
 dames  
 Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve  
 Smiles to leave 50  
 To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece  
 In such peace,  
 And the slopes and rills in undistinguished  
 gray  
 Melt away—  
 That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair 55  
 Waits me there  
 In the turret whence the charioteers caught  
 soul  
 For the goal,

When the king looked, where she looks now,  
 breathless, dumb  
 Till I come. 60

But he looked upon the city, every side,  
 Far and wide,  
 All the mountains topped with temples, all the  
 glades'  
 Colonnades,  
 All the causeys,<sup>1</sup> bridges, aqueducts,—and  
 then, 65  
 All the men!  
 When I do come, she will speak not, she will  
 stand,  
 Either hand  
 On my shoulder, give her eyes the first em-  
 brace  
 Of my face, 70  
 Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and  
 speech  
 Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth  
 South and North,  
 And they built their gods a brazen pillar high  
 As the sky, 76  
 Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full  
 force—  
 Gold, of course.  
 Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that  
 burns!  
 Earth's returns 80  
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!  
 Shut them in  
 With their triumphs and their glories and the  
 rest!  
 Love is best.

## UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY<sup>2</sup>

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON  
 OF QUALITY)

HAD I but plenty of money, money enough and  
 to spare,  
 The house for me, no doubt, were a house in  
 the city-square;  
 Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the  
 window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to  
 hear, at least!  
 There, the whole day long, one's life is a per-  
 fect feast; 5  
 While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no  
 more than a beast.

<sup>1</sup>Causeways.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1855.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn  
of a bull

Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the crea-  
ture's skull,

Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf  
to pull!

—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the  
hair's turned wool. 10

But the city, oh the city—the square with  
the houses! Why?

They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's  
something to take the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single front  
awry;

You watch who crosses and gossips, who saun-  
ters, who hurries by;

Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw  
when the sun gets high; 15

And the shops with fanciful signs which are  
painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in  
March by rights,

'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have  
withered well off the heights:

You've the brown plowed land before, where  
the oxen steam and wheeze,

And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint  
gray olive-trees. 20

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've sum-  
mer all at once;

In a day he leaps complete with a few strong  
April suns.

'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce  
risen three fingers well,

The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out  
its great red bell

Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the  
children to pick and sell. 25

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a  
fountain to spout and splash!

In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine  
such foambows flash

On the horses with curling fish-tails, that  
prance and paddle and pash

Round the lady atop in her conch—fifty  
gazers do not abash,

Though all that she wears is some weeds round  
her waist in a sort of sash. 30

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see  
though you linger,

Except you cypress that points like death's  
lean lifted forefinger.

Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix 't  
the corn and mingle,

Or thrid<sup>1</sup> the stinking hemp till the stalks of  
it seem a-tingle.

Late August or early September, the stunning  
cicala is shrill, 35

And the bees keep their tiresome whine round  
the resinous firs on the hill.

Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the  
months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the  
blessed church-bells begin:

No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence  
rattles in:

You get the pick of the news, and it costs you  
never a pin. 40

By and by there's the traveling doctor gives  
pills, lets blood, draws teeth;

Or the Pulcinello-trumpet<sup>2</sup> breaks up the  
market beneath.

At the post-office such a scene-picture—the  
new play, piping hot!

And a notice how, only this morning, three  
liberal thieves<sup>3</sup> were shot.

Above it, behold the Archbishop's most  
fatherly of rebukes, 45

And beneath, with his crown and his lion,  
some little new law of the Duke's!

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Rever-  
end Don So-and-so,

Who is<sup>4</sup> Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint  
Jerome, and Cicero,

"And moreover," (the sonnet goes riming)  
"the skirts of Saint Paul has reached,

Having preached us those six Lent-lectures  
more unctuous than ever he preached." 50

Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession!  
our Lady borne smiling and smart

With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and  
seven swords stuck in her heart!<sup>5</sup>

*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-te-  
tootle* the fife;

No keeping one's haunches still: it's the great-  
est pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine,  
at double the rate. 55

They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and  
what oil pays passing the gate<sup>6</sup>

It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa  
for me, not the city!

<sup>1</sup>Thread.

<sup>2</sup>The trumpet announcing a Punch-and-Judy show.

<sup>3</sup>*I.e.*, those executed were republicans, and "thieves" indicates the "person of quality's" attitude towards those whose politics differed from his.

<sup>4</sup>*I.e.*, rivals.

<sup>5</sup>The swords symbolize the Seven Sorrows of our Lady—the Virgin Mary.

<sup>6</sup>*I.e.*, what tax has to be paid when it is brought into the city.

Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still—  
 ah, the pity, the pity!  
 Look, two and two go the priests, then the  
 monks with cows and sandals,  
 And the penitents dressed in white shirts,  
 a-holding the yellow candles; 60  
 One, he carries a flag up straight, and another  
 a cross with handles,  
 And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for  
 the better prevention of scandals:  
*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-te-*  
*tootle* the fife.  
 Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such  
 pleasure in life!

### THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER<sup>1</sup>

I SAID—Then, dearest, since 'tis so,  
 Since now at length my fate I know,  
 Since nothing all my love avails,  
 Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,  
 Since this was written and needs must be— 5  
 My whole heart rises up to bless  
 Your name in pride and thankfulness!  
 Take back the hope you gave,—I claim  
 Only a memory of the same,  
 —And this beside, if you will not blame, 10  
 Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;  
 Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs  
 When pity would be softening through,  
 Fixed me a breathing-while or two 15  
 With life or death in the balance: right!  
 The blood replenished me again;  
 My last thought was at least not vain:  
 I and my mistress, side by side  
 Shall be together, breathe and ride, 20  
 So, one day more am I deified.  
 Who knows but the world may end to-  
 night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
 All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed  
 By many benedictions—sun's 25  
 And moon's and evening-star's at once—  
 And so, you, looking and loving best,  
 Conscious grew, your passion drew  
 Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
 Down on you, near and yet more near, 30  
 Till flesh must fade for heaven was here!—  
 Thus leant she and lingered—joy and fear!  
 Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul  
 Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll 35

Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
 Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?  
 Had I said that, had I done this,  
 So might I gain, so might I miss. 40  
 Might she have loved me? just as well  
 She might have hated, who can tell!  
 Where had I been now if the worst befell?  
 And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds? 45  
 Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?  
 We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,  
 Saw other regions, cities new,  
 As the world rushed by on either side.  
 I thought,—All labor, yet no less 50  
 Bear up beneath their unsuccess.  
 Look at the end of work, contrast  
 The petty done, the undone vast,  
 This present of theirs with the hopeful past!  
 I hoped she would love me; here we ride. 55

What hand and brain went ever paired?  
 What heart alike conceived and dared?  
 What act proved all its thought had been?  
 What will but felt the fleshly screen?  
 We ride and I see her bosom heave. 60  
 There's many a crown for who can reach.  
 Ten lines,<sup>2</sup> a statesman's life in each!  
 The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
 A soldier's doing! what atones?  
 They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.<sup>3</sup>  
 My riding is better, by their leave. 66

What does it all mean, poet? Well,  
 Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell  
 What we felt only; you expressed  
 You hold things beautiful the best, 70  
 And place them in rime so, side by side.  
 'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,  
 Have you yourself what's best for men?  
 Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—  
 Nearer one whit your own sublime 75  
 Than we who never have turned a rime?  
 Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave  
 A score of years to Art, her slave,  
 And that's your Venus, whence we turn 80  
 To yonder girl that fords the burn!  
 You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
 What, man of music, you grown gray  
 With notes and nothing else to say,  
 Is this your sole praise from a friend, 85  
 "Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
 But in music we know how fashions end!"  
 I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1855.

<sup>2</sup>*I.e.*, of history.

<sup>3</sup>At Westminster.



Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate  
Proposed bliss here should sublimiate 90  
My being—had I signed the bond—  
Still one must lead some life beyond,  
Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.  
This foot once planted on the goal,  
This glory-garland round my soul, 95  
Could I descry such? Try and test!  
I sink back shuddering from the quest.  
Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?  
Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long! 100  
What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
At life's best, with our eyes upturned  
Whither life's flower is first discerned,  
We, fixed so, ever should so abide?  
What if we still ride on, we two, 105  
With life for ever old yet new,  
Changed not in kind but in degree,  
The instant made eternity,—  
And heaven just prove that I and she  
Ride, ride together, for ever ride? 110

### RESPECTABILITY<sup>1</sup>

DEAR, had the world in its caprice  
Deigned to proclaim "I know you both,  
Have recognized your plighted troth,  
Am sponsor for you: live in peace!"—  
How many precious months and years 5  
Of youth had passed, that speed so fast,  
Before we found it out at last,  
The world, and what it fears!

How much of priceless life were spent  
With men that every virtue decks, 10  
And women models of their sex,  
Society's true ornament,—  
Ere we dared wander, nights like this,  
Through wind and rain, and watch the  
Seine,  
And feel the Boulevard break again 15  
To warmth and light and bliss!

I know! the world proscribes not love;  
Allows my finger to caress  
Your lips' contour and downiness,  
Provided it supply a glove. 20  
The world's good word!—the Institute!  
Guizot receives Montalembert!<sup>2</sup>  
Eh? Down the court three lampions<sup>3</sup> flare:  
Put forward your best foot!

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1855.

<sup>2</sup>The glove is the body of accepted social conventions. The French Institute symbolizes the rewards of conventionality. Guizot as a liberal hated ultramontaniam, represented by Montalembert, but, the latter keeping within the bounds of conventionality, the former welcomed him into the Institute.

<sup>3</sup>Small lamps.

### THE STATUE AND THE BUST<sup>4</sup>

THERE's a palace in Florence, the world knows  
well,

And a statue watches it from the square,<sup>5</sup>  
And this story of both do our townsmen tell.

Ages ago, a lady there,  
At the farthest window facing the East 5  
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air?"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased;  
She leaned forth, one on either hand;  
They saw how the blush of the bride in-  
creased—

They felt by its beats her heart expand— 10  
As one at each ear and both in a breath  
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdinand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,  
The Duke rode past in his idle way,  
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath. 15

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,  
Till he threw his head back—"Who is she?"  
—"A bride the Riccardi brings home to-day."

Hair in heaps lay heavily  
Over a pale brow spirit-pure— 20  
Carved like the heart of the coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war-steed's encolure—<sup>6</sup>  
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes  
Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1855. The following inquiry was once sent to an American newspaper:

"1. When, how, and where did it happen? Browning's divine vagueness lets one gather only that the lady's husband was a Riccardi. 2. Who was the lady? who the duke? 3. The magnificent house wherein Florence lodges her préfet is known to all Florentine ball-goers as the Palazzo Riccardi. It was bought by the Riccardi from the Medici in 1650. From none of its windows did the lady gaze at her more than royal lover. From what window, then, if from any? Are the statue and the bust still in their original positions?"

These questions were found by Mr. Thomas J. Wise, who sent them to Browning. He received from Browning the following reply, written on 8 January, 1887:

"DEAR MR. WISE,—I have seldom met with such a strange inability to understand what seems the plainest matter possible: 'ball-goers' are probably not history-readers, but any guide-book would confirm what is sufficiently stated in the poem. I will append a note or two, however. 1. 'This story the townsmen tell;' 'when, how, and where,' constitutes the subject of the poem. 2. The lady was the wife of Riccardi; and the duke, Ferdinand, just as the poem says. 3. As it was built by, and inhabited by, the Medici till sold, long after, to the Riccardi, it was not from the duke's palace, but a window in that of the Riccardi, that the lady gazed at her lover riding by. The statue is still in its place, looking at the window under which 'now is the empty shrine.' Can anything be clearer? My 'vagueness' leaves what to be 'gathered' when all these things are put down in black and white? Oh, 'ball-goers'!"

<sup>5</sup>The Piazza della Annunziata. The statue is of the Grand Duke Ferdinand I.

<sup>6</sup>Neck and shoulders.

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise 25  
 Filled the fine empty sheath of a man,—  
 The Duke grew straightway brave and wise.

He looked at her, as a lover can;  
 She looked at him, as one who awakes:  
 The past was a sleep, and her life began. 30

Now, love so ordered for both their sakes,  
 A feast was held that selfsame night  
 In the pile which the mighty shadow makes.<sup>1</sup>

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,  
 But the palace overshadows one, 35  
 Because of a crime, which may God requite!

To Florence and God the wrong was done,  
 Through the first republic's murder there  
 By Cosimo<sup>2</sup> and his curséd son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the  
 square) 40  
 Turned in the midst of his multitude  
 At the bright approach of the bridal pair.

Face to face the lovers stood  
 A single minute and no more,  
 While the bridegroom bent as a man sub-  
 dued— 45

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor—  
 For the Duke on the lady a kiss conferred,  
 As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word?  
 If a word did pass, which I do not think, 50  
 Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's brink  
 He and his bride were alone at last  
 In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast, 55  
 That the door she had passed was shut on her  
 Till the final catafalk<sup>3</sup> repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir,  
 Through a certain window facing the East  
 She could watch like a convent's chronicler.

Since passing the door might lead to a feast, 61  
 And a feast might lead to so much beside,  
 He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride—  
 "Your window and its world suffice," 65  
 Replied the tongue, while the heart replied—

<sup>1</sup>The Palace of Ferdinand.

<sup>2</sup>Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1464). Through him Florence prospered, while its republican government was undermined. He built the palace later occupied by Ferdinand.

<sup>3</sup>Funeral canopy.

"If I spend the night with that devil twice.  
 May his window serve as my loop of hell  
 Whence a damned soul looks on paradise!

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well, 70  
 Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow  
 Ere I count another ave-bell.

"'Tis only the coat of a page to borrow,  
 And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim,  
 And I save my soul—but not to-morrow"—

(She checked herself and her eye grew dim) 76  
 "My father tarries to bless my state:  
 I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait?  
 Moreover the Duke rides past, I know; 80  
 We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just so!  
 So we resolve on a thing and sleep:  
 So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or cheap  
 As the cost of this cup of bliss may prove 86  
 To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,  
 He beckoned the bridegroom (close on call,  
 As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove) 90

And smiled "'Twas a very funeral,  
 Your lady will think, this feast of ours,—  
 A shame to efface, whate'er befall!

"What if we break from the Arno bowers,  
 And try if Petraja,<sup>4</sup> cool and green, 95  
 Cure last night's fault with this morning's  
 flowers?"

The bridegroom, not a thought to be seen  
 On his steady brow and quiet mouth,  
 Said, "Too much favor for me so mean!

"But, alas! my lady leaves the South;<sup>5</sup> 100  
 Each wind that comes from the Apennine  
 Is a menace to her tender youth:

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,  
 If she quits her palace twice this year,  
 To avert the flower of life's decline." 105

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly fear.  
 Moreover Petraja is cold this spring:  
 Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

<sup>4</sup>Outside of Florence. The Arno is a river flowing through Florence.

<sup>5</sup>I. e., is from the South. Apennine is the mountain range amidst which Florence is situated.

And then to himself—"Which night shall  
bring  
Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool— 110  
Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor cool—  
For to-night the Envoy arrives from France  
Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my tool.

"I need thee still and might miss perchance.  
To-day is not wholly lost, beside, 116  
With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride—what should I do but ride?  
And passing her palace, if I list,  
May glance at its window—well betide!" 120

So said, so done: nor the lady missed  
One ray that broke from the ardent brow,  
Nor a curl of the lips where the spirit kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,  
No morrow's sun should arise and set 125  
And leave them then as it left them now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,  
With still fresh cause to wait one day more  
Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore, 130  
With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,  
They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly,  
But not in despite of heaven and earth:  
The rose would blow when the storm passed  
by. 135

Meantime they could profit in winter's dearth  
By store of fruits that supplant the rose:  
The world and its ways have a certain worth:

And to press a point while these oppose  
Were simple<sup>1</sup> policy; better wait: 140  
We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's fate,  
Who daily may ride and pass and look  
Where his lady watches behind the grate!

And she—she watched the square like a book  
Holding one picture and only one, 146  
Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book was  
done,  
And she turned from the picture at night to  
scheme  
Of tearing it out for herself next sun. 150

<sup>1</sup>Silly.

So weeks grew months, years; gleam by gleam  
The glory dropped from their youth and love,  
And both perceived they had dreamed a dream;

Which hovered as dreams do, still above:  
But who can take a dream for a truth? 155  
Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day as the lady saw her youth  
Depart, and the silver thread that streaked  
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so peaked,—  
And wondered who the woman was, 161  
Hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass—  
"Summon here," she suddenly said,  
"Before the rest of my old self pass, 165

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,  
Who fashions the clay no love will change,  
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let Robbia's craft<sup>2</sup> so apt and strange  
Arrest the remains of young and fair, 170  
And rivet them while the seasons range.

"Make me a face on the window there,  
Waiting as ever, mute the while,  
My love to pass below in the square!

"And let me think that it may beguile 175  
Dreary days which the dead must spend  
Down in their darkness under the aisle,

"To say, 'What matters it at the end?  
I did no more while my heart was warm  
Than does that image, my pale-faced friend.'

"Where is the use of the lip's red charm, 181  
The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,  
And the blood that blues the inside arm—

"Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,  
The earthly gift to an end divine? 185  
A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,  
With flowers and fruits which leaves enlace.  
Was set where now is the empty shrine—

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space, 190  
As a ghost might lean from a chink of sky,  
The passionate pale lady's face—

<sup>2</sup>Robbia is not here the name of the artist (the last famous Robbia had died in 1566), but is applied to the kind of work done by the Robbias—terra-cotta relief work covered with enamel.



Eying ever, with earnest eye  
And quick-turned neck at its breathless  
stretch,  
Some one who ever is passing by—) 195

The Duke had sighed like the simplest wretch  
In Florence, "Youth—my dream escapes!  
Will its record stay?" And he bade them  
fetch

Some subtle molder of brazen shapes—  
"Can the soul, the will, die out of a man 200  
Ere his body find the grave that gapes?

"John of Douay shall effect my plan,  
Set me on horseback here aloft,  
Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

"In the very square I have crossed so oft:  
That men may admire, when future suns 206  
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

"While the mouth and the brow stay brave in  
bronze—  
Admire and say, 'When he was alive  
How he would take his pleasure once!' 210

"And it shall go hard but I contrive  
To listen the while, and laugh in my tomb  
At idleness which aspires to strive."

So! While these wait the trump of doom,  
How do their spirits pass, I wonder, 215  
Nights and days in the narrow room?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder  
What a gift life was, ages ago,  
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know, 220  
Nor all that chivalry of his,  
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss—  
Since, the end of life being manifest,  
He had burned his way through the world to  
this. 225

I hear you reproach, "But delay was best,  
For their end was a crime."—Oh, a crime will  
do  
"Well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,  
Sufficient to vindicate itself 230  
And prove its worth at a moment's view!

Must a game be played for the sake of pelf?  
Where a button goes, 'twere an epigram  
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.<sup>1</sup>

The true has no value beyond the sham: 235  
As well the counter as coin, I submit,  
When your table's a hat, and your prize, a  
dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,  
Venture as warily, use the same skill,  
Do your best, whether winning or losing it,

If you chose to play!—is my principle. 241  
Let a man contend to the uttermost  
For his life's set prize, be it what it will!

The counter our lovers staked was lost  
As surely as if it were lawful coin: 245  
And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost

Is—the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,  
Though the end in sight was a vice, I say.  
You of the virtue (we issue join)  
How strive you? *De te, fabula!*<sup>2</sup>

## THE PATRIOT<sup>3</sup>

### AN OLD STORY

IT WAS roses, roses, all the way,  
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:  
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,  
The church-spires flamed, such flags they  
had,  
A year ago on this very day. 5

The air broke into a mist with bells,  
The old walls rocked with the crowd and  
cries.  
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels—  
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"  
They had answered "And afterward, what  
else?" 10

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun  
To give it my loving friends to keep!  
Naught man could do, have I left undone:  
And you see my harvest, what I reap  
This very day, now a year is run. 15

There's nobody on the house-tops now—  
Just a palsied few at the windows set;  
For the best of the sight is, all allow,  
At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,  
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow. 20

<sup>1</sup>Where a button will pass as readily as real money ("the stamp of the very Guelph") it would be absurd ("an epigram," i.e., a matter for satire) to use the latter.

<sup>2</sup>The story concerns you.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1855.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,  
 A rope cuts both my wrists behind;  
 And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,  
 For they fling, whoever has a mind,  
 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds. 25

Thus I entered, and thus I go!  
 In triumphs, people have dropped down  
 dead.  
 "Paid by the world, what dost thou owe  
 Me?"—God might question; now instead,  
 'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so. 30

### FRA LIPPO LIPPI<sup>1</sup>

I AM poor brother Lippo, by your leave!  
 You need not clap your torches to my face.  
 Zooks, what's to blame? you think you see  
 a monk!

What, 'tis past midnight, and you go the  
 rounds,

And here you catch me at an alley's end 5  
 Where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar?  
 The Carmine's my cloister:<sup>2</sup> hunt it up,  
 Do,—harry out, if you must show your zeal,  
 Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong hole,  
 And nip each softling of a wee white mouse, 10  
*Weke, weke*, that's crept to keep him company!  
 Aha, you know your betters! Then, you'll  
 take

Your hand away that's fiddling on my throat,  
 And please to know me likewise. Who am I?  
 Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a friend 15  
 Three streets off—he's a certain . . . how d'y'e  
 call?

Master—a . . . Cosimo of the Medici,<sup>3</sup>  
 I' the house that caps the corner. Boh! you  
 were best!

Remember and tell me, the day you're hanged,  
 How you affected such a gullet's-gripe! 20

But you, sir, it concerns you that your knaves  
 Pick up a manner nor discredit you:  
 Zooks, are we pilchards, that they sweep the  
 streets

And count fair prize what comes into their  
 net?

He's Judas to a tittle, that man is! 25  
 Just such a face! Why, sir, you make amends.  
 Lord, I'm not angry! Bid your handdogs go  
 Drink out this quarter-florin to the health  
 Of the munificent House that harbors me  
 (And many more beside, lads! more beside!) 30  
 And all's come square again. I'd like his  
 face—

His, elbowing on his comrade in the door  
 With the pike and lantern,—for the slave that  
 holds

John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair  
 With one hand ("Look you, now," as who  
 should say) 35

And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped!  
 It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk,  
 A wood-coal or the like? or you should see!  
 Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.  
 What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down,  
 You know them and they take you? like  
 enough! 41

I saw the proper twinkle in your eye—  
 'Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.  
 Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to  
 haunch.

Here's spring come, and the nights one makes  
 up bands 45

To roam the town and sing out carnival,  
 And I've been three weeks shut within my  
 mew,

A-painting for the great man, saints and  
 saints

And saints again. I could not paint all  
 night—

Ouf! I leaned out of window for fresh air. 50  
 There came a hurry of feet and little feet,  
 A sweep of lute-strings, laughs, and whiffs of  
 song,—

*Flower o' the broom,*  
*Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!*

*Flower o' the quince,* 55

*I let Lisa go, and what good in life since?*

*Flower o' the thyme*<sup>4</sup>—and so on. Round they  
 went.

Scarce had they turned the corner when a  
 titter

Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight,—  
 three slim shapes,

And a face that looked up . . . zooks, sir, flesh  
 and blood, 60

That's all I'm made of! Into shreds it went,  
 Curtain and counterpane and coverlet,  
 All the bed-furniture—a dozen knots,  
 There was a ladder! Down I let myself,  
 Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and so  
 dropped, 65

And after them. I came up with the fun  
 Hard by Saint Laurence,<sup>5</sup> hail fellow, well  
 met,—

*Flower o' the rose,*  
*If I've been merry, what matter who knows?*

And so as I was stealing back again 70  
 To get to bed and have a bit of sleep

Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work  
 On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1855. Filippo Lippi's life (1406?–1469) is to be found in Vasari's *Lives of the Painters*.

<sup>2</sup>The monastery of the friars Del Carmine.

<sup>3</sup>Cosimo de' Medici (1389–1464), who built "the house that caps the corner" in 1430. The time of the poem is between that year and 1432, when Fra Lippo left his monastery.

<sup>4</sup>This and the following flower-songs are modeled on the *stornelli* sung by the peasants of Tuscany.

<sup>5</sup>The church of San Lorenzo.

With his great round stone to subdue the  
flesh,  
You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see! 75  
Though your eye twinkles still, you shake  
your head—  
Mine's shaved—a monk, you say—the sting's  
in that!  
If Master Cosimo announced himself,  
Mum's the word naturally; but a monk!  
Come, what am I a beast for? tell us, now!  
I was a baby when my mother died 81  
And father died and left me in the street.  
I starved there, God knows how, a year or two  
On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and shucks,  
Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day, 85  
My stomach being empty as your hat,  
The wind doubled me up and down I went.  
Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one hand  
(Its fellow was a stinger as I knew),  
And so along the wall, over the bridge, 90  
By the straight cut to the convent. Six words  
there,  
While I stood munching my first bread that  
month:  
"So, boy, you're minded," quoth the good  
fat father,  
Wiping his own mouth, 'twas refection-  
time,—  
"To quit this very miserable world? 95  
Will you renounce" . . . "the mouthful of  
bread?" thought I;  
By no means! Brief, they made a monk of  
me;  
I did renounce the world, its pride and greed,  
Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-house,  
Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici 100  
Have given their hearts to—all at eight years  
old.  
Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure,  
'Twas not for nothing—the good bellyful,  
The warm serge and the rope that goes all  
round,  
And day-long blessed idleness beside! 105  
"Let's see what the urchin's fit for"—that  
came next.  
Not overmuch their way, I must confess.  
Such a to-do! They tried me with their  
books;  
Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in pure  
waste!  
*Flower o' the clove,* 110  
*All the Latin I construe is "amo," I love!*  
But, mind you, when a boy starves in the  
streets  
Eight years together, as my fortune was,  
Watching folk's faces to know who will fling  
The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he  
desires, 115  
And who will curse or kick him for his pains,—  
Which gentleman processional and fine,

Holding a candle to the Sacrament,  
Will wink and let him lift a plate and catch  
The droppings of the wax to sell again, 120  
Or holla for the Eight<sup>1</sup> and have him  
whipped,—  
How say I?—nay, which dog bites, which lets  
drop  
His bone from the heap of offal in the street,—  
Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp alike,  
He learns the look of things, and none the less  
For admonition from the hunger-pinch. 126  
I had a store of such remarks, be sure,  
Which, after I found leisure, turned to use.  
I drew men's faces on my copy-books,  
Scrawled them within the antiphony's<sup>2</sup>  
marge, 130  
Joined legs and arms to the long music-notes,  
Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and  
B's,  
And made a string of pictures of the world  
Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun,  
On the wall, the bench, the door. The  
monks looked black. 135  
"Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out, d'ye  
say?"  
In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a lark.  
What if at last we get our man of parts,  
We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese  
And Preaching Friars,<sup>3</sup> to do our church up  
fine 140  
And put the front on it that ought to be!"  
And hereupon he bade me daub away.  
Thank you! my head being crammed, the  
walls a blank,  
Never was such prompt disemburdening.  
First, every sort of monk, the black and  
white, 145  
I drew them, fat and lean: then, folk at  
church,  
From good old gossips waiting to confess  
Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-ends,—  
To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot, 149  
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting there  
With the little children round him in a row  
Of admiration, half for his beard and half  
For that white anger of his victim's son  
Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm,  
Signing himself with the other because of  
Christ 155  
(Whose sad face on the cross sees only this  
After the passion of a thousand years)  
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head,  
(Which the intense eyes looked through) came  
at eve  
On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf, 160  
Her pair of earrings and a bunch of flowers  
(The brute took growling), prayed, and so was  
gone.

<sup>1</sup>The magistrates who governed Florence.<sup>2</sup>The Roman service-book.<sup>3</sup>The Dominicans.



I painted all, then cried "'Tis ask and have;  
Choose, for more's ready!"—laid the ladder  
flat, 164

And showed my covered bit of cloister-wall.  
The monks closed in a circle and praised loud  
Till checked, taught what to see and not to  
see,

Being simple bodies,—“That’s the very man!  
Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog!  
That woman’s like the Prior’s niece who  
comes 170

To care about his asthma: it’s the life!”  
But there my triumph’s straw-fire flared and  
funked;

Their betters took their turn to see and say:  
The Prior and the learned pulled a face  
And stopped all that in no time. “How?  
what’s here? 175

Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all!  
Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true  
As much as pea and peal it’s devil’s-gamel  
Your business is not to catch men with show,  
With homage to the perishable clay, 180  
But lift them over it, ignore it all,  
Make them forget there’s such a thing as  
flesh.

Your business is to paint the souls of men—  
Man’s soul, and it’s a fire, smoke . . . no, it’s  
not . . . 184

It’s vapor done up like a new-born babe—  
(In that shape when you die it leaves your  
mouth)

It’s . . . well, what matters talking, it’s the  
soul!

Give us no more of body than shows soul!  
Here’s Giotto,<sup>1</sup> with his Saint a-praising God,  
That sets us praising,—why not stop with  
him? 190

Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head  
With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?  
Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!  
Rub all out, try at it a second time.

Oh, that white smallish female with the  
breasts, 195

She’s just my niece . . . Herodias,<sup>2</sup> I would  
say,—

Who went and danced and got men’s heads  
cut off!

Have it all out!” Now, is this sense, I ask?  
A fine way to paint soul, by painting body  
So ill, the eye can’t stop there, must go further  
And can’t fare worse! Thus, yellow does for  
white 201

When what you put for yellow’s simply black,  
And any sort of meaning looks intense

When all beside itself means and looks  
naught.

Why can’t a painter lift each foot in turn, 205

Left foot and right foot, go a double step,  
Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,  
Both in their order? Take the prettiest face,  
The Prior’s niece . . . patron-saint—is it so  
pretty

You can’t discover if it means hope; fear, 210  
Sorrow or joy? won’t beauty go with these?  
Suppose I’ve made her eyes all right and blue,  
Can’t I take breath and try to add life’s flash,  
And then add soul and heighten them three-  
fold?

Or say there’s beauty with no soul at all—215  
(I never saw it—put the case the same—)  
If you get simple beauty and naught else,  
You get about the best thing God invents:  
That’s somewhat: and you’ll find the soul you  
have missed, 219

Within yourself, when you return him thanks.  
“Rub all out!” Well, well, there’s my life, in  
short,

And so the thing has gone on ever since.  
I’m grown a man no doubt, I’ve broken  
bounds:

You should not take a fellow eight years  
old 224

And make him swear to never kiss the girls.  
I’m my own master, paint now as I please—  
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-  
house!<sup>3</sup>

Lord, it’s fast holding by the rings in front—  
Those great rings serve more purposes than  
just

To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse! 230  
And yet the old schooling sticks, the old grave  
eyes

Are peeping o’er my shoulder as I work,  
The heads shake still—“It’s art’s decline, my  
son!

You’re not of the true painters, great and old;  
Brother Angelico’s<sup>4</sup> the man, you’ll find; 235  
Brother Lorenzo stands his single peer:  
Fag on at flesh, you’ll never make the third!”

*Flower o’ the pine,*

*You keep your mistr . . . manners, and I’ll  
stick to mine!*

I’m not the third, then: bless us, they must  
know! 240

Don’t you think they’re the likeliest to know,  
They with their Latin? So, I swallow my  
rage,

Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight, and  
paint

To please them—sometimes do and sometimes  
don’t; 244

<sup>3</sup>I.e., in the Medici Palace.

<sup>4</sup>Fra Angelico (1387–1455) was a religious painter, painting the soul and not minding the legs and arms. He is said to have fasted and prayed before painting, and to have painted some of his pictures while kneeling. Lorenzo Monaco (the monk) was a painter of the Camaldolese.

<sup>1</sup>Architect and painter (1266–1337).

<sup>2</sup>See St. Matthew, xiv, 6–11.

For, doing most, there's pretty sure to come  
 A turn, some warm eve finds me at my saints—  
 A laugh, a cry, the business of the world—  
*(Flower o' the peach,*  
*Death for us all, and his own life for each!)*  
 And my whole soul revolves, the cup runs  
 over, 250  
 The world and life's too big to pass for a  
 dream,  
 And I do these wild things in sheer despite,  
 And play the fooleries you catch me at,  
 In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out at  
 grass 254  
 After hard years, throws up his stiff heels so,  
 Although the miller does not preach to him  
 The only good of grass is to make chaff.  
 What would men have? Do they like grass  
 or no—  
 May they or mayn't they? all I want's the  
 thing  
 Settled for ever one way. As it is, 260  
 You tell too many lies and hurt yourself:  
 You don't like what you only like too much,  
 You do like what, if given you at your word,  
 You find abundantly detestable.  
 For me, I think I speak as I was taught; 265  
 I always see the garden and God there  
 A-making man's wife: and, my lesson learned,  
 The value and significance of flesh,  
 I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I know.  
 But see, now—why, I see as certainly 271  
 As that the morning-star's about to shine,  
 What will hap some day. We've a youngster  
 here  
 Comes to our convent, studies what I do,  
 Slouches and stares and lets no atom drop: 275  
 His name is Guidi<sup>1</sup>—he'll not mind the  
 monks—  
 They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them  
 talk—  
 He picks my practice up—he'll paint apace,  
 I hope so—though I never live so long, 279  
 I know what's sure to follow. You be judge!  
 You speak no Latin more than I, belike;  
 However, you're my man, you've seen the  
 world  
 —The beauty and the wonder and the power,  
 The shapes of things, their colors, lights and  
 shades,  
 Changes, surprises,—and God made it all! 285  
 —For what? Do you feel thankful, ay or no,  
 For this fair town's face, yonder river's line,  
 The mountain round it and the sky above,  
 Much more the figures of man, woman, child,  
 These are the frame to? What's it all about?

To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,  
 Wondered at? oh, this last of course!—you  
 say. 292  
 But why not do as well as say,—paint these  
 Just as they are, careless what comes of it?  
 God's works—paint any one, and count it  
 crime 295  
 To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His  
 works  
 Are here already; nature is complete:  
 Suppose you reproduce her—(which you  
 can't)  
 There's no advantage! you must beat her,  
 then."  
 For, don't you mark? we're made so that  
 we love 300  
 First when we see them painted, things we  
 have passed  
 Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;  
 And so they are better, painted—better to  
 us,  
 Which is the same thing. Art was given for  
 that;  
 God uses us to help each other so, 305  
 Lending our minds out. Have you noticed,  
 now,  
 Your cullion's<sup>2</sup> hanging face? A bit of chalk,  
 And trust me but you should, though! How  
 much more,  
 If I drew higher things with the same truth!  
 That were to take the Prior's pulpit-place, 310  
 Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,  
 It makes me mad to see what men shall do  
 And we in our graves! This world's no blot  
 for us,  
 Nor blank; it means intensely, and means  
 good:  
 To find its meaning is my meat and drink. 315  
 "Ay, but you don't so instigate to prayer!"  
 Strikes in the Prior: "when your meaning's  
 plain  
 It does not say to folk—remember matins,  
 Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why, for  
 this  
 What need of art at all? A skull and bones,  
 Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or, what's  
 best, 321  
 A bell to chime the hour with, does as well.  
 I painted a Saint Laurence six months since  
 At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine style:  
 "How looks my painting, now the scaffold's  
 down?" 325  
 I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns—  
 "Already not one phiz of your three slaves  
 Who turn the Deacon off his toasted side,<sup>3</sup>  
 But's scratched and prodded to our heart's  
 content,

<sup>1</sup>Tommaso Guidi, called Masaccio (1401-1428). Browning for the sake of his point reverses the historical relationship between him and Fra Lippo.

<sup>2</sup>Fellow's.

<sup>3</sup>St. Laurence suffered martyrdom by being burned on a gridiron.

The pious people have so eased their own 330  
 With coming to say prayers there in a rage:  
 We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.  
 Expect another job this time next year,  
 For pity and religion grow i' the crowd—  
 Your painting serves its purpose!" Hang the  
 fools! 335

—That is—you'll not mistake an idle word  
 Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God wot,  
 Tasting the air this spicy night which turns  
 The unaccustomed head like Chianti wine!  
 Oh, the church knows! don't misreport me,  
 now! 340

It's natural a poor monk out of bounds  
 Should have his apt word to excuse himself:  
 And hearken how I plot to make amends.  
 I have bethought me: I shall paint a piece  
 . . . There's for you! Give me six  
 months, then go, see 345  
 Something in Sant' Ambrogio's! Bless the  
 nuns!

They want a cast o' my office. I shall paint!  
 God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,  
 Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood,  
 Lilies and vestments and white faces, sweet  
 As puff on puff of grated orris-root 351  
 When ladies crowd to Church at midsummer.  
 And then i' the front, of course a saint or  
 two—

Saint John, because he saves the Florentines,  
 Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black and  
 white 355

The convent's friends and gives them a long  
 day,

And Job, I must have him there past mistake,  
 The man of Uz (and Us without the z,  
 Painters who need his patience). Well, all  
 these

Secured at their devotion, up shall come 360  
 Out of a corner when you least expect,  
 As one by a dark stair into a great light,  
 Music and talking, who but Lippo! I!—  
 Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck—I'm  
 the man!

Back I shrink—what is this I see and hear? 365  
 I, caught up with my monk's-things by  
 mistake,

My old serge gown and rope that goes all  
 round,

I, in this presence, this pure company!  
 Where's a hole, where's a corner for escape?  
 Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing 370  
 Forward, puts out a soft palm—"Not so  
 fast!"

—Addresses the celestial presence, "nay—  
 He made you and devised you, after all,

Though he's none of you! Could Saint John  
 there draw—

His camel-hair make up a painting-brush? 375  
 We come to brother Lippo for all that,  
*Iste perfectit opus!*"<sup>2</sup> So, all smile—

I shuffle sideways with my blushing face  
 Under the cover of a hundred wings  
 Thrown like a spread of kirtles when you're  
 gay 380

And play hot cockles, all the doors being shut,  
 Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops  
 The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle off  
 To some safe bench behind, not letting go  
 The palm of her, the little lily thing 385  
 That spoke the good word for me in the nick,  
 Like the Prior's niece . . . Saint Lucy, I  
 would say.

And so all's saved for me, and for the church  
 A pretty picture gained. Go, six months  
 hence!

Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights, no  
 lights! 390

The street's hushed, and I know my own way  
 back,

Don't fear me! There's the gray beginning.  
 Zooks!

### ANDREA DEL SARTO<sup>3</sup>

#### CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,  
 No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:  
 Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.  
 You turn your face, but does it bring your  
 heart?

I'll work then for your friend's friend, never  
 fear, 5

Treat his own subject after his own way,  
 Fix his own time, accept too his own price,  
 And shut the money into this small hand  
 When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?  
 Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow, Love!  
 I often am much wearier than you think, 11  
 This evening more than usual, and it seems  
 As if—forgive now—should you let me sit  
 Here by the window with your hand in mine  
 And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,<sup>4</sup> 15  
 Both of one mind, as married people use,  
 Quietly, quietly the evening through,  
 I might get up to-morrow to my work  
 Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.  
 To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this! 20  
 Your soft hand is a woman of itself,

<sup>2</sup>This man made the picture (work). The words appear in the picture, on a scroll running from the speaker towards Fra Lippo.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1855. Andrea's life (1486-1531) is to be found in Vasari's *Lives of the Painters*.

<sup>4</sup>A small town about three miles west of Florence.

<sup>1</sup>The picture described is known as "The Coronation of the Virgin." It is now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti at Florence.



And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.  
 Don't count the time lost, neither; you must serve  
 For each of the five pictures we require:  
 It saves a model. So! keep looking so— 25  
 My serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds!  
 —How could you ever prick those perfect ears,  
 Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet—  
 My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,  
 Which everybody looks on and calls his, 30  
 And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,  
 While she looks—no one's: very dear, no less.  
 You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,  
 There's what we painters call our harmony!  
 A common grayness silvers everything,— 35  
 All in a twilight, you and I alike  
 —You, at the point of your first pride in me  
 (That's gone you know),—but I, at every point;  
 My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down  
 To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole. 40  
 There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;  
 That length of convent-wall across the way  
 Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;  
 The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,  
 And autumn grows, autumn in everything. 45  
 Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape  
 As if I saw alike my work and self  
 And all that I was born to be and do,  
 A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.  
 How strange now looks the life he makes us lead; 50  
 So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!  
 I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!  
 This chamber for example—turn your head—  
 All that's behind us! You don't understand  
 Nor care to understand about my art, 55  
 But you can hear at least when people speak:  
 And that cartoon, the second from the door  
 —It is the thing, Love! so such thing should be—  
 Behold Madonna!—I am bold to say.  
 I can do with my pencil what I know, 60  
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart  
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—  
 Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,  
 I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,  
 Who listened to the Legate's talk last week, 65  
 And just as much they used to say in France.  
 At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!  
 No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:  
 I do what many dream of all their lives,  
 —Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do, 70  
 And fail in doing. I could count twenty such

On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,  
 Who strive—you don't know how the others strive  
 To paint a little thing like that you smeared  
 Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—  
 Yet do much less, so much less, Someone 76  
 says,  
 (I know his name, no matter)—so much less!  
 Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.  
 There burns a truer light of God in them,  
 In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain, 80  
 Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt  
 This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.  
 Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,  
 Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,  
 Enter and take their place there sure enough,  
 Though they come back and cannot tell the world. 86  
 My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.  
 The sudden blood of these men! at a word—  
 Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.  
 I, painting from myself and to myself, 90  
 Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame  
 Or their praise either. Somebody remarks  
 Morello's outline<sup>1</sup> there is wrongly traced,  
 His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,  
 Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?  
 Speak as they please, what does the mountain care? 96  
 Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
 Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray  
 Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!  
 I know both what I want and what might gain, 100  
 And yet how profitless to know, to sigh  
 "Had I been two, another and myself,  
 Our head would have o'erlooked the world!"  
 No doubt.  
 Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth  
 The Urbinate<sup>2</sup> who died five years ago. 105  
 ('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)  
 Well, I can fancy how he did it all,  
 Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,  
 Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him, 109  
 Above and through his art—for it gives way;  
 That arm is wrongly put—and there again—  
 A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,  
 Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,  
 He means right—that, a child may understand.  
 Still, what an arm! and I could alter it: 115

<sup>1</sup>Morello is a mountain of the Apennines, north of Florence.

<sup>2</sup>Raphael (1483-1520), who was born at Urbino.

But all the play, the insight and the stretch—  
 Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?  
 Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,  
 We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!  
 Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—  
 More than I merit, yes, by many times. 121  
 But had you—oh, with the same perfect brow,  
 And perfect eyes, and more than perfect  
 mouth,

And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird  
 The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare—  
 Had you, with these the same, but brought  
 a mind! 126

Some women do so. Had the mouth there  
 urged,

"God and the glory! never care for gain.  
 The present by the future, what is that?  
 Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!" 130  
 Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"

I might have done it for you. So it seems:  
 Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.

Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;  
 The rest avail not. Why do I need you? 135

What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?  
 In this world, who can do a thing, will not;  
 And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:

Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the  
 power— 139

And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,  
 God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.

'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,  
 That I am something underrated here,

Poor this long while, despised, to speak the  
 truth. 144

I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,  
 For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.

The best is when they pass and look aside;  
 But they speak sometimes; I must bear it  
 all.

Well may they speak! That Francis,<sup>2</sup> that  
 first time, 149

And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!  
 I surely then could sometimes leave the  
 ground,

Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,  
 In that humane great monarch's golden  
 look,—

One finger in his beard or twisted curl  
 Over his mouth's good mark that made the  
 smile, 155

One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,  
 The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,  
 I painting proudly with his breath on me,  
 All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,  
 Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of  
 souls 160

Profuse, my hand kept plying by those  
 hearts,—

And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,  
 This in the background, waiting on my work,  
 To crown the issue with a last reward!

A good time, was it not, my kingly days? 165  
 And had you not grown restless . . . but

I know—  
 'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct  
 said;

Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,  
 And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should  
 tempt

Out of the grange whose four walls make his  
 world. 170

How could it end in any other way?  
 You called me, and I came home to your heart.

The triumph was—to reach and stay there;  
 since

I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?  
 Let my hands frame your face in your hair's  
 gold, 175

You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!  
 "Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;  
 The Roman's is the better when you pray,  
 But still the other's Virgin was his wife"—

Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge 180  
 Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows  
 My better fortune, I resolve to think.

For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,  
 Said one day Agnolo, his very self,  
 To Rafael . . . I have known it all these  
 years . . . 185

(When the young man was flaming out his  
 thoughts

Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,  
 Too lifted up in heart because of it)

"Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub  
 Goes up and down our Florence, none cares  
 how, 190

Who, were he set to plan and execute  
 As you are, pricked on by your popes and  
 kings,

Would bring the sweat into that brow of  
 yours!"

To Rafael's!—And indeed the arm is wrong.  
 I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,  
 Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line  
 should go! 196

Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!  
 Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,  
 (What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?

Do you forget already words like those?) 200  
 If really there was such a chance, so lost,—  
 Is, whether you're—not grateful—but more  
 pleased.

Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!  
 This hour has been an hour! Another smile?

If you would sit thus by me every night 205  
 I should work better, do you comprehend?

<sup>1</sup>Michael Angelo (1475–1564).

<sup>2</sup>King Francis I of France, Andrea's patron. Fontainebleau is a town near Paris, where is situated the royal palace in which Andrea worked.

I mean that I should earn more, give you more.  
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;  
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the  
wall, 209

The cue-owls<sup>1</sup> speak the name we call them by.  
Come from the window, love,—come in, at  
last,

Inside the melancholy little house  
We built to be so gay with. God is just. 213  
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights

When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,  
The walls become illumined, brick from brick  
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,  
That gold of his I did cement them with!

Let us but love each other. Must you go?  
That Cousin here again? he waits outside? 220  
Must see you—you, and not with me? Those  
loans?

More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for  
that?

Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to  
spend?

While hand and eye and something of a heart  
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it  
worth? 225

I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit  
The gray remainder of the evening out,  
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly  
How I could paint, were I but back in France,  
One picture, just one more—the Virgin's  
face, 230

Not yours this time! I want you at my side  
To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—  
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.

Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.  
I take the subjects for his corridor, 235  
Finish the portrait out of hand—there, there,  
And throw him in another thing or two

If he demurs; the whole should prove enough  
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,  
What's better and what's all I care about, 240  
Get you the thirteen scudi<sup>2</sup> for the ruff!

Love, does that please you? Ah, but what  
does he,

The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.  
I regret little, I would change still less. 245  
Since there my past life lies, why alter it?

The very wrong to Francis!—it is true  
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,  
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.  
My father and my mother died of want. 250

Well, had I riches of my own? you see  
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.  
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor  
they died:

And I have labored somewhat in my time 254  
And not been paid profusely. Some good son  
Paint my two hundred pictures—let him try!  
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance.

Yes,  
You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.  
This must suffice me here. What would one  
have?

In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more  
chance— 260

Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,  
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,  
For Leonard,<sup>3</sup> Rafael, Agnolo and me  
To cover—the three first without a wife, 264  
While I have mine! So—still they overcome  
Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

## A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL<sup>4</sup>

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING  
IN EUROPE

LET US begin and carry up this corpse,  
Singing together.

Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar  
thorpes<sup>5</sup>

Each in its tether  
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain, 5  
Cared-for till cock-crow:

Look out if yonder be not day again  
Rimming the rock-row!

That's the appropriate country; there, man's  
thought,

Rarer, intenser, 10  
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,  
Chafes in the censer.

Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and  
crop;

Seek we sepulture  
On a tall mountain, citied to the top, 15  
Crowded with culture!

All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;  
Clouds overcome it;

No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's  
Circling its summit. 20

Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights;  
Wait ye the warning?

Our low life was the level's and the night's;  
He's for the morning.

Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,  
'Ware the beholders! 26

This is our master, famous, calm and dead,  
Borne on our shoulders.

<sup>3</sup>Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519).

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1855.

<sup>5</sup>The common farms, the vulgar villages.

<sup>1</sup>The scops owl, whose cry sounds like Italian *cicù*.

<sup>2</sup>Coins worth about 97 cents.



Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe  
 and croft,  
 Safe from the weather! 30  
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,  
 Singing together,  
 He was a man born with thy face and throat,  
 Lyric Apollo!  
 Long he lived nameless: how should Spring  
 take note 35  
 Winter would follow?  
 Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!  
 Cramped and diminished,  
 Moaned he, "New measures, other feet anon!  
 My dance is finished?" 40  
 No, that's the world's way: (keep the moun-  
 tain-side,  
 Make for the city!)  
 He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride  
 Over men's pity;  
 Left play for work, and grappled with the  
 world 45  
 Bent on escaping:  
 "What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou  
 keepest furled?  
 Show me their shaping,  
 Theirs who most studied man, the bard and  
 sage,—  
 Give!"—So, he gowned him, 50  
 Straight got by heart that book to its last  
 page:  
 Learned, we found him.  
 Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,  
 Accents uncertain:  
 "Time to taste life," another would have said,  
 "Up with the curtain!" 56  
 This man said rather, "Actual life comes  
 next?  
 Patience a moment!  
 Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed  
 text,  
 Still there's the comment. 60  
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or least,  
 Painful or easy!  
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,  
 Ay, nor feel queasy."  
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live, 65  
 When he had learned it,  
 When he had gathered all books had to give!  
 Sooner, he spurned it.  
 Image the whole, then execute the parts—  
 Fancy the fabric 70  
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from  
 quartz,  
 Ere mortar dab brick!  
 (Here's the town-gate reached: there's the  
 market-place  
 Gaping before us.)  
 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace 75  
 (Hearten our chorus!)

That before living he'd learn how to live—  
 No end to learning:  
 Earn the means first—God surely will contrive  
 Use for our earning. 80  
 Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes:  
 Live now or never!"  
 He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs  
 and apes!  
 Man has Forever."  
 Back to his book then: deeper drooped his  
 head: 85  
*Calculus*<sup>1</sup> racked him:  
 Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:  
*Tussis*<sup>2</sup> attacked him.  
 "Now, master, take a little rest!"—not he!  
 (Caution redoubled, 90  
 Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)  
 Not a whit troubled,  
 Back to his studies, fresher than at first,  
 Fierce as a dragon  
 He (soul-hydroptic<sup>3</sup> with a sacred thirst) 95  
 Sucked at the flagon.  
 Oh, if we draw a circle premature,  
 Heedless of far gain,  
 Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure  
 Bad is our bargain! 100  
 Was it not great? did not he throw on God,  
 (He loves the burthen)—  
 God's task to make the heavenly period  
 Perfect the earthen?  
 Did not he magnify the mind, show clear 105  
 Just what it all meant?  
 He would not discount life, as fools do here,  
 Paid by instalment.  
 He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's  
 success  
 Found, or earth's failure: 110  
 "Wilt thou trust death or not?" He an-  
 swered "Yes!  
 Hence with life's pale lure!"  
 That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
 Sees it and does it:  
 This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
 Dies ere he knows it. 116  
 That low man goes on adding one to one,  
 His hundred's soon hit:  
 This high man, aiming at a million,  
 Misses an unit. 120  
 That, has the world here—should he need  
 the next,  
 Let the world mind him!  
 This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed  
 Seeking shall find him.  
 So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,  
 Ground he at grammar; 126  
 Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were  
 rife;  
 While he could stammer

<sup>1</sup>The stone.<sup>2</sup>A cough.<sup>3</sup>Soul-thirsty.

He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!—  
 Properly based *Oun*— 130  
 Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*<sup>1</sup>  
 Dead from the waist down.  
 Well, here's the platform, here's the proper  
 place:  
 Hail to your purlieus,  
 All ye highfliers of the feathered race, 135  
 Swallows and curlews!  
 Here's the top-peak; the multitude below  
 Live, for they can, there:  
 This man decided not to Live but Know—  
 Bury this man there? 140  
 Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot,  
 clouds form,  
 Lightnings are loosened,  
 Stars come and go! Let joy break with the  
 storm,  
 Peace let the dew send!  
 Lofty designs must close in like effects: 145  
 Loftily lying,  
 Leave him—still loftier than the world sus-  
 pects,  
 Living and dying.

# ABT VOGLER<sup>2</sup>

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPO-  
 RIZING UPON  
 THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OF HIS  
 INVENTION)

Would that the structure brave, the mani-  
 fold music I build,  
 Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys  
 to their work,  
 Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch,  
 as when Solomon willed  
 Armies of angels that soar, legions of  
 demons that lurk,  
 Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end and  
 of aim, 5  
 Adverse, each from the other heaven-high,  
 hell-deep removed,—  
 Should rush into sight at once as he named  
 the ineffable Name,

<sup>1</sup>These are Greek particles, meaning respectively *that*, *there-  
 fore*, and *towards*. Concerning the last Browning wrote to  
 the London *Daily News* on 20 November, 1874. "In a clever  
 article this morning you speak of 'the doctrine of enclitic  
*De*'—'which, with all deference to Mr. Browning, in point  
 of fact does not exist.' No, not to Mr. Browning: but pray  
 defer to Herr Buttmann, whose fifth list of 'enclitics' ends  
 with 'the inseparable *De*'—or to Curtius, whose fifth list ends  
 also with '*De* (meaning '*towards*' and as a demonstrative  
 appendage)." That this is not to be confounded with the ac-  
 centuated '*De*, meaning *but*' was the 'doctrine' which the  
 Grammarian bequeathed to those capable of receiving it."

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1864. George Joseph Vogler (1749–1814),  
 organist and composer, was a native of Würzburg. He in-  
 vented an instrument called the *Orchestrion*—a compact  
 organ with four keyboards of five octaves each and a pedal-  
 board of thirty-six keys. Vogler was a Catholic priest—hence  
 Browning's "Abt."

And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure  
 the princess he loved!<sup>3</sup>  
 Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful  
 building of mine,  
 This which my keys in a crowd pressed  
 and importuned to raise! 10  
 Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dis-  
 part now and now combine,  
 Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their  
 master his praise!  
 And one would bury his brow with a blind  
 plunge down to hell,  
 Burrow awhile and build, broad on the  
 roots of things,  
 Then up again swim into sight, having based  
 me my palace well, 15  
 Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on the  
 nether springs.

And another would mount and march, like  
 the excellent minion he was,  
 Ay, another and yet another, one crowd  
 but with many a crest,  
 Raising my rampired<sup>4</sup> walls of gold as trans-  
 parent as glass,  
 Eager to do and die, yield each his place to  
 the rest: 20  
 For higher still and higher (as a runner tips  
 with fire,  
 When a great illumination surprises a  
 festal night—  
 Outlining round and round Rome's dome<sup>5</sup>  
 from space to spire)  
 Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the  
 pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was  
 certain, to match man's birth, 25  
 Nature in turn conceived, obeying an im-  
 pulse as I;  
 And the emulous heaven yearned down,  
 made effort to reach the earth,  
 As the earth had done her best, in my  
 passion, to scale the sky:  
 Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar  
 and dwelt with mine,  
 Not a point nor peak but found and fixed  
 its wandering star; 30  
 Meteor-moons, balls of blaze: and they did  
 not pale nor pine,  
 For earth had attained to heaven, there was  
 no more near nor far.

Nay more; for there wanted not who walked  
 in the glare and glow,

<sup>3</sup>Jewish legend gave Solomon such powers as this. "The  
 ineffable Name" is the unspeakable name of God.

<sup>4</sup>Rampire means, rampart. <sup>5</sup>St. Peter's.

Presences<sup>1</sup> plain in the place; or, fresh from  
the Protoplast,<sup>2</sup>  
Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier  
wind should blow, 35  
Lured now to begin and live, in a house to  
their liking at last;  
Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed  
through the body and gone,  
But were back once more to breathe in an  
old world worth their new:  
What never had been, was now; what was,  
as it shall be anon;  
And what is,—shall I say, matched both?  
for I was made perfect too. 40

All through my keys that gave their sounds  
to a wish of my soul,  
All through my soul that praised as its wish  
flowed visibly forth,  
All through music and me! For think, had I  
painted the whole,  
Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the  
process so wonder-worth:  
Had I written the same, made verse—still,  
effect proceeds from cause, 45  
Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear  
how the tale is told;  
It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience  
to laws,  
Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list  
enrolled:—

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the  
will that can,  
Existent behind all laws, that made them  
and, lo, they are! 50  
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be  
allowed to man,  
That out of three sounds he frame, not a  
fourth sound, but a star.  
Consider it well: each tone of our scale in  
itself is naught:  
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft,  
and all is said:  
Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my  
thought: 55  
And, there! Ye have heard and seen: con-  
sider and bow the head!

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I  
reared;  
Gone! and the good tears start, the praises  
that come too slow;  
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say  
that he feared,  
That he even gave it a thought, the gone  
thing was to go. 60

Never to be again! But many more of the  
kind

As good, nay, better perchance: is this  
your comfort to me?  
To me, who must be saved because I cling  
with my mind  
To the same, same self, same love, same  
God: ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to Thee, the  
ineffable Name? 65

Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not  
made with hands!

What, have fear of change from Thee who art  
ever the same?

Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart  
that Thy power expands?

There shall never be one lost good! What  
was, shall live as before;

The evil is null, is naught, is silence imply-  
ing sound; 70

What was good shall be good, with, for evil,  
so much good more;

On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven  
a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of  
good shall exist;

Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty,  
nor good, nor power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives  
for the melodist 75

When eternity affirms the conception of an  
hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for  
earth too hard,

The passion that left the ground to lose  
itself in the sky,

Are music sent up to God by the lover and  
the bard;

Enough that he heard it once: we shall  
hear it by and by. 80

And what is our failure here but a triumph's  
evidence

For the fullness of the days? Have we  
withered or agonized?

Why else was the pause prolonged but that  
singing might issue thence?

Why rushed the discords in, but that  
harmony should be prized?

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to  
clear, 85

Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the  
weal and woe:

But God has a few of us whom he whispers in  
the ear;

The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis  
we musicians know.

<sup>1</sup>Spirits.

<sup>2</sup>The thing first formed, as a model to be imitated.



Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes her reign:

I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce. 90

Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord<sup>1</sup> again,

Sliding by semitones, till I sink to the minor,—yes,

And I blunt it into a ninth,<sup>2</sup> and I stand on alien ground,

Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into the deep;

Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my resting-place is found, 95

The C Major<sup>3</sup> of this life: so, now I will try to sleep.

### PROSPICE<sup>4</sup>

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my throat,  
The mist in my face,

When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
I am nearing the place,

The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
The post of the foe; 6

Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,

Yet the strong man must go:

For the journey is done and the summit attained,

And the barriers fall, 10

Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,

The reward of it all.

I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,

The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes,  
and forebore; 15

And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers

The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold. 20

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,

The black minute's at end,

And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain, 25

Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest!

### RABBI BEN EZRA<sup>5</sup>

Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be,

The last of life, for which the first was made:  
Our times are in His hand

Who saith, "A whole I planned, 5  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,

Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,  
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"

Not that, admiring stars, 10

It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;

Mine be some figured flame which blends,  
transcends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears

Annulling youth's brief years,

Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark! 15

Rather I prize the doubt

Low kinds exist without,

Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,

Were man but formed to feed 20

On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:

Such feasting ended, then

As sure an end to men;

Irks care the crop full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied 25

To That which doth provide

And not partake, effect, and not receive!

A spark disturbs our clod;

Nearer we hold of God

Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe. 30

Then, welcome each rebuff

That turns earth's smoothness rough,

Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!

Be our joys three-parts pain!

Strive, and hold cheap the strain; 35

Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

<sup>1</sup>A fundamental tone with its major (4 semitones) or minor (3 semitones) third, and a perfect fifth (7 semitones) above it.

<sup>2</sup>Either an interval containing an octave and two semitones (major) or one containing an octave and one semitone (minor).

<sup>3</sup>This scale contains no sharps or flats.

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1864, written in 1861 not long after Mrs. Browning's death. The title means, Look forward.

<sup>5</sup>Published in 1864. Abenezra, or Ibn Ezra (1090?–1168?), was one of the most distinguished Jewish learned men of the Middle Age, and attained eminence as philosopher, astronomer, physician, and poet, and particularly as grammarian and commentator. Browning derived much in this poem from his works, though his own views coincided largely with Ibn Ezra's teaching.

For thence,—a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks,—  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:  
What I aspired to be, 40  
And was not, comforts me:  
A brute I might have been, but would not  
sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute  
Whose flesh has soul to suit,  
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want  
play? 45  
To man, propose this test—  
Thy body at its best,  
How far can that project thy soul on its lone  
way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:  
I own the Past profuse 50  
Of power each side, perfection every turn:  
Eyes, ears took in their dole,  
Brain treasured up the whole;  
Should not the heart beat once "How good to  
live and learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine! 55  
I see the whole design,  
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too:  
Perfect I call Thy plan:  
Thanks that I was a man!  
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what Thou  
shalt do!" 60

For pleasant is this flesh;  
Our soul, in its rose-mesh  
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:  
Would we some prize might hold  
To match those manifold 65  
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did  
best!

Let us not always say,  
"Spite of this flesh to-day  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the  
whole!"  
As the bird wings and sings, 70  
Let us cry, "All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than  
flesh helps soul!"

Therefore I summon age  
To grant youth's heritage,  
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:  
Thence shall I pass, approved 76  
A man, for aye removed  
From the developed brute; a God though in  
the germ.

And I shall thereupon  
Take rest, ere I be gone 80

Once more on my adventure brave and new:  
Fearless and unperplexed,  
When I wage battle next,  
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.<sup>1</sup>

Youth ended, I shall try 85  
My gain or loss thereby;  
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:  
And I shall weigh the same,  
Give life its praise or blame:  
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being  
old. 90

For note, when evening shuts,  
A certain moment cuts  
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray:  
A whisper from the west  
Shoots—"Add this to the rest, 95  
Take it and try its worth: here dies another  
day."

So, still within this life,  
Though lifted o'er its strife,  
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,  
"This rage was right i' the main, 100  
That acquiescence vain:  
The Future I may face now I have proved the  
Past."

For more is not reserved  
To man, with soul just nerved  
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day: 105  
Here, work enough to watch  
The Master work, and catch  
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's  
true play.

As it was better, youth  
Should strive, through acts uncouth, 110  
Toward making, than repose on aught found  
made:  
So, better, age, exempt  
From strife, should know, than tempt  
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death  
nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right 115  
And Good and Infinite  
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand  
thine own,  
With knowledge absolute,  
Subject to no dispute  
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee  
feel alone. 120

Be there, for once and all,  
Severed great minds from small,

<sup>1</sup>To put on.

Announced to each his station in the Past!  
 Was I, the world arraigned,  
 Were they, my soul disdained, 125  
 Right? Let age speak the truth and give us  
 peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?  
 Ten men love what I hate,  
 Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;  
 Ten, who in ears and eyes 130  
 Match me: we all surmise,  
 They this thing, and I that: whom shall my  
 soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass  
 Called "work," must sentence pass,  
 Things done, that took the eye and had the  
 price; 135  
 O'er which, from level stand,  
 The low world laid its hand,  
 Found straightway to its mind, could value in  
 a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb  
 And finger failed to plumb, 140  
 So passed in making up the main account;  
 All instincts immature,  
 All purposes unsure,  
 That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the  
 man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed 145  
 Into a narrow act,  
 Fancies that broke through language and  
 escaped;  
 All I could never be,  
 All, men ignored in me,  
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the  
 pitcher shaped. 150

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,<sup>1</sup>  
 That metaphor! and feel  
 Why time spins fast, why passive lies our  
 clay,—

Thou, to whom fools poupond,  
 When the wine makes its round, 155  
 "Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone,  
 seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,  
 Lasts ever, past recall;  
 Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand  
 sure:  
 What entered into thee, 160  
 That was, is, and shall be:  
 Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and  
 clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
 Of plastic circumstance,  
 This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain ar-  
 rest: 165

Machinery just meant  
 To give thy soul its bent,  
 Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently  
 impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,  
 Which ran the laughing loves 170  
 Around thy base, no longer pause and press;  
 What though, about thy rim,  
 Skull-things in order grim  
 Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner  
 stress?

Look not thou down but up! 175  
 To uses of a cup,  
 The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's  
 peal,  
 The new wine's foaming flow,  
 The Master's lips aglow!  
 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what  
 needst thou with earth's wheel? 180

But I need, now as then,  
 Thee, God, who moldest men;  
 And since, not even while the whirl was  
 worst,  
 Did I—to the wheel of life  
 With shapes and colors rife, 185  
 Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake Thy  
 thirst:

So, take and use Thy work:  
 Amend what flaws may lurk,  
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past  
 the aim!  
 My times be in Thy hand! 190  
 Perfect the cup as planned!  
 Let age approve of youth, and death com-  
 plete the same!

## NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE<sup>2</sup>

NEVER the time and the place  
 And the loved one all together!  
 This path—how soft to pace!  
 This May—what magic weather!  
 Where is the loved one's face? 5  
 In a dream that loved one's face meets mine,  
 But the house is narrow, the place is bleak  
 Where, outside, rain and wind combine  
 With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,  
 With a hostile eye at my flushing cheek, 10

<sup>1</sup>See Isaiah, lxi, 8; also Jeremiah, xviii, 1-6.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1883.



With a malice that marks each word, each  
sign!

O enemy sly and serpentine,

Uncoil thee from the waking man!

Do I hold the Past

Thus firm and fast

15

Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?

This path so soft to pace shall lead

Through the magic of May to herself in-  
deed!

Or narrow if needs the house must be,

Outside are the storms and strangers: we—

Oh, close, safe, warm sleep I and she,—I  
and she!

21

### EPILOGUE<sup>1</sup>

AT THE midnight in the silence of the sleep-  
time,

When you set your fancies free,

Will they pass to where—by death, fools  
think, imprisoned—

Low he lies who once so loved you, whom  
you loved so,

—Pity me?

5

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1880. The poem concludes *Asolando*, the  
last volume Browning published.

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!

What had I on earth to do

With the slothful, with the mawkish, the  
unmanly?

Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I  
drivel

—Being—who?

10

One who never turned his back but marched  
breast forward,

Never doubted clouds would break,

Never dreamed, though right were worsted,  
wrong would triumph,

Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
Sleep to wake.

15

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-  
time

Greet the unseen with a cheer!

Bid him forward, breast and back as either  
should be,

“Strive and thrive!” cry “Speed,—fight on,  
fare ever

There as here!”

20

## EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809-1883)

FitzGerald's father was John Purcell, the son of a wealthy Irish doctor, who had married his first cousin, Mary Frances FitzGerald, and who, on the death of her father, took the name and arms of FitzGerald. Edward was the seventh of their eight children, and was born at Bredfield House, near Woodbridge, Suffolk, on 31 March, 1809. In 1821 he was sent to King Edward the Sixth's Grammar School at Bury St. Edmonds. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1826, and took his degree in 1830. At school had begun what was to be a life-long friendship with James Spedding, the editor, biographer, and whole-hearted defender of Francis Bacon. At Cambridge a similar friendship with Thackeray was formed. The Tennysons, Charles, Frederic, and Alfred, were also college contemporaries, but he did not know them until later. The greater part of FitzGerald's life was passed in the county of his birth. He was not pressed by his family to enter any profession, and apparently never even thought of doing so. He had an allowance from his father until the latter's bankruptcy, and thereafter from his mother—her estates not being involved—until her death, after which he enjoyed a large income. For some of his relatives he felt a true affection, but got along well with all of them by dint of meeting them very seldom. At Cambridge he had formed large plans for literary work; but after his departure he drifted promptly into a vague, easy, indeterminate way of life which lasted, not entirely to his content, yet not without its sufficient rewards, until his death. In 1837, feeling a need for a place of his own, he took a thatched lodge on property belonging to his family. "Here, with Shakespeare's bust in a recess, with a cat, a dog, and a parrot called 'Beauty Bob,' he began what he called a very pleasant Robinson Crusoe sort of life. He was waited upon by an old couple, John Faiers, a laborer on the estate, a Waterloo veteran, and Mrs. Faiers, a red-armed, vain, and snuff-taking lady, with a flower-trimmed bonnet. FitzGerald installed his books and pictures in the cottage. The place was a scene of desperate confusion. There were books everywhere; pictures on easels; music, pipes, sticks lying on tables or on the piano. A barrel of beer provided the means of simple conviviality. Here FitzGerald would sit, unkempt and unshaven, in dressing-gown and slippers, or moon about in the garden. He strolled about the neighborhood, calling on his friends; sometimes, but rarely, he went to church, noting

the toadstools that grew in the chancel; and led a thoroughly indolent life," though still with dreams of literary achievement.

This picture, drawn by A. C. Benson, is typical, and may stand for FitzGerald's way of life from this time on, though as he grew older he grew somewhat more eccentric, withdrew himself further and further from the world and society, and became more convinced than ever of the futility of earthly existence—without, however, losing his interest in literature and in his own occasional and modest achievements, and without ceasing to carry on correspondence with dear friends. The two closest to him at the time of Benson's picture were George Crabbe, son of the poet (who liked his father for everything except his poetry), and Bernard Barton, a Quaker poet of Woodbridge, and friend of Charles Lamb. When Barton died, FitzGerald undertook to see that his daughter, Lucy, was provided for, and ended by marrying her (November, 1856). It was, as he seems himself to have suspected, a wretchedly mistaken venture; and after a few months the two separated, without ill-feeling, Lucy receiving through the remainder of her life a liberal allowance from him. Meanwhile FitzGerald had published *Euphranor* (1851), a dialogue in the Platonic manner, in which he sought to define the well-balanced man, and *Polonius: A Collection of Wise Saws and Modern Instances* (1852), and *Six Dramas of Calderon Freely Translated* (1853). The last was the only book which he published with his own name attached to it—and he did so in this instance only to help distinguish his book from another volume of translations from Calderon which was published almost simultaneously. His modesty, his detachment, his concern for the work rather than for his own reputation, all contributed to his determined anonymity; but, in addition, he had an actual dislike for his own name. He had "some unpleasant associations with it," he said. Later he printed other translations—all, like the one upon which his fame now securely rests, free adaptations rather than faithful renderings, aimed to catch the spirit rather than the letter, in a form pleasing to English readers. He owed his acquaintance with Persian literature to his friend E. B. Cowell, later a professor at Cambridge, and found the quatrains of Omar Khayyám peculiarly congenial to his own temper—so much so, in fact, that he drifted almost unawares into the attempt to make an English poem of them. The first edition of the *Rubáiyát* was printed in

1859. Other editions, much changed, appeared in 1868, 1872, and 1879.

During all these years FitzGerald's quiet life went on with little change. Very rarely he saw friends from a distance. Carlyle had visited him in 1855, and had never afterwards lost touch with this "lonely, shy, kind-hearted man," as he called him. In 1876 Tennyson visited him, and on this occasion his host told the great man that it would have been better for his reputation had he ceased to write poetry after 1842—but their old friendship was not broken. At this time FitzGerald was living in his own house, Little Grange, which he had owned since 1864, but which he apparently objected to occupying—as he was only forced to inhabit it after he had been ejected from lodgings in Woodbridge, and had found other lodgings

uncomfortable. The reason for his ejection was characteristic. His landlord, named Berry, became engaged to a widow. FitzGerald did not like the impending change, and remarked that "old Berry would now have to be called 'Old Gooseberry.'" The widow heard of this, and punished the offender by compelling his ejection. He had still some years to live, dying suddenly on 14 June, 1883, while on a visit to the grandson of the poet Crabbe, at Merton Rectory, in Norfolk. In 1889 his friend W. Aldis Wright published his *Letters and Literary Remains* in three volumes, and thus gave FitzGerald a new claim to remembrance;—for, if he very properly remains best known for his singularly happy rendering of the *Rubáiyát*, he has become only less well known as one of the most delightful letter-writers England has had.

## RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM<sup>1</sup>

(1859)

### I

WAKE! For the Sun, who scattered into  
flight

The Stars before him from the field of Night,  
Drives Night along with them from heav'n,  
and strikes

The Sultán's turret with a shaft of light.

### II

Before the phantom of False Morning<sup>2</sup> died, 5  
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried:

"When all the temple is prepared within,  
Why nods the drowsy worshiper outside?"

### III

And, as the cock crew, those who stood before  
The Tavern shouted: "Open, then, the door!

You know how little while we have to  
stay,

And, once departed, may return no more."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The poem is here printed in its final form (4th ed., 1879). Omar Khayyám lived during the last half of the 11th century and the earlier years of the 12th. He was a philosopher and a man of science, and during the later years of his life was the astronomer-royal at the court of the Turkish sultan then ruling in Persia. He aided at this time in reforming the calendar. His extant quatrains are about 1200 in number, though not all of these may really come from his hand. Those qualified to judge say that FitzGerald's poem reproduces very exactly the spirit of Omar's verse; but it is not, in the sense of the word now usual, a translation. Great liberties are taken in rearranging, combining, compressing, and omitting Omar's quatrains, so as to permit the composition of an English poem of moderate length having the connection between its parts, the organic structure, which Western readers expect.

<sup>2</sup>A transient light on the horizon about an hour before the true dawn; a well-known phenomenon in the East. (FitzGera.)

### IV

Now the New Year<sup>3</sup> reviving old desires,  
The thoughtful soul to solitude retires,

Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES<sup>4</sup> on the  
bough

Puts out, and Jesus from the ground suspires.<sup>5</sup>

### V

Iram<sup>6</sup> indeed is gone with all his Rose,  
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ringed Cup<sup>7</sup> where no  
one knows:

But still a ruby kindles in the vine,  
And many a garden by the water blows. 20

### VI

And David's lips are locked; but in divine  
High-piping Pehlevi,<sup>8</sup> with "Wine! Wine!  
Wine!

Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the  
Rose

That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

### VII

Come, fill the cup, and in the fire of spring 25  
Your winter-garment of repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way  
To flutter—and the Bird is on the wing.

<sup>3</sup>Beginning on 21 March.

<sup>4</sup>See Exodus, iv, 6. (The expression here denotes the white blossoms of the spring.)

<sup>5</sup>Breathes. (The Persians conceived the healing power of Jesus to reside in his breath.)

<sup>6</sup>A royal garden now sunk somewhere in the sands of Arabia. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>7</sup>It was typical of the 7 heavens, 7 planets, 7 seas, etc., and was a divining cup. (FitzGerald.) Jamshyd was an ancient king of Persia.

<sup>8</sup>The old heroic Sanskrit of Persia. (FitzGerald.) The people's language changes with the generations, while the nightingale's song remains ever the same.



## VIII

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,  
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run, 30  
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,  
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

## IX

Each morn a thousand roses brings, you say:  
Yes, but where leaves the rose of yesterday?  
And this first summer month that brings  
the rose 35  
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

## X

Well, let it take them! What have we to do  
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?  
Let Zál and Rustum<sup>1</sup> bluster as they will,  
Or Hátim call to supper—heed not you. 40

## XI

With me along the strip of herbage strown  
That just divides the desert from the sown,  
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—  
And peace to Mahmúd<sup>2</sup> on his golden throne!

## XII

A book of verses underneath the bough, 45  
A jug of wine, a loaf of bread—and Thou  
Beside me singing in the wilderness—  
Oh, wilderness were Paradise enow!

## XIII

Some for the glories of this world; and some  
Sigh for the Prophet's<sup>3</sup> Paradise to come; 50  
Ah, take the cash, and let the credit go,  
Nor heed the rumble of a distant drum!<sup>4</sup>

## XIV

Look to the blowing Rose about us—"Lo,  
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,  
At once the silken tassel of my purse 55  
Tear, and its treasure<sup>5</sup> on the garden throw."

## XV

And those who husbanded the golden grain,  
And those who flung it to the winds like rain,  
Alike to no such aureate earth are turned  
As, buried once, men want dug up again. 60

<sup>1</sup>The Hercules of Persia. Zál was his father. Hátim, a well-known type of oriental generosity. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>2</sup>The earliest ruler of Persia to call himself sultan (c. 975).

<sup>3</sup>Mahomet's.

<sup>4</sup>Beaten outside a palace. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>5</sup>The rose's golden center. (FitzGerald.)

## XVI

The worldly hope men set their hearts upon  
Turns ashes—or it prospers; and anon,  
Like snow upon the desert's dusty face,  
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

## XVII

Think, in this battered Caravanseraí 65  
Whose portals are alternate Night and Day,  
How Sultán after Sultán with his pomp  
Abode his destined hour, and went his way.

## XVIII

They say the lion and the lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank  
deep: 70  
And Bahrám,<sup>6</sup> that great Hunter—the wild  
ass  
Stamps o'er his head, but cannot break his  
sleep.

## XIX

I sometimes think that never blows so red  
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;  
That every hyacinth the garden wears 75  
Dropped in her lap from some once lovely  
head.

## XX

And this reviving herb whose tender green  
Fledges the river-lip on which we lean—  
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows 79  
From what once lovely lip it springs unseen!

## XXI

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the cup that clears  
TODAY of past regrets and future fears:  
To-morrow!—Why, to-morrow I may be  
Myself with yesterday's Sev'n Thousand  
Years.<sup>7</sup> 84

## XXII

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best  
That from his vintage rolling Time hath  
pressed,  
Have drunk their Cup a round or two  
before,  
And one by one crept silently to rest.

## XXIII

And we that now make merry in the room 89  
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,  
Ourselves, must we beneath the couch of  
earth  
Descend—ourselves to make a couch—for  
whom?

<sup>6</sup>A Sassanid ruler of Persia, who sank in a swamp while hunting.

<sup>7</sup>A thousand years to each planet. (FitzGerald.)

## XXIV

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,  
Before we too into the dust descend:

Dust into dust, and under dust to lie, 95  
Sans wine, sans song, sans singer, and—  
sans end!

## XXV

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,  
And those that after some To-morrow stare,  
A Muezzin<sup>1</sup> from the Tower of Darkness  
cries, 99  
"Fools! your reward is neither here nor there."

## XXVI

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed  
Of the Two Worlds so wisely—they are thrust  
Like foolish prophets forth: their words  
to scorn  
Are scattered, and their mouths are stopped  
with dust.

## XXVII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent 105  
Doctor and saint, and heard great argument  
About it and about: but evermore  
Came out by the same door where in I went.

## XXVIII

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,  
And with mine own hand wrought to make it  
grow; 110  
And this was all the harvest that I reaped:  
"I came like water, and like wind I go."

## XXIX

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing  
Nor *Whence*, like water willy-nilly flowing;  
And out of it, as wind along the waste, 115  
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

## XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?  
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence?  
Oh, many a cup of this forbidden wine  
Must drown the memory of that insolence! 120

## XXXI

Up from Earth's center through the Seventh  
Gate  
I rose, and on the throne of Saturn<sup>2</sup> sate,  
And many a knot unraveled by the road,  
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

## XXXII

There was the door to which I found no key;  
There was the veil through which I might not  
see: 126  
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE<sup>3</sup>  
There was—and then no more of THEE and  
ME.

## XXXIII

Earth could not answer; nor the seas that  
mourn  
In flowing purple, of their Lord forlorn; 130  
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs  
revealed  
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

## XXXIV

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind  
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find  
A lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard, 135  
As from Without: "THE ME WITHIN THEE  
BLIND!"

## XXXV

Then to the lip of this poor earthen urn  
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn:  
And lip to lip it murmured: "While you  
live,  
Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall  
return." 140

## XXXVI

I think the vessel, that with fugitive  
Articulation answered, once did live,  
And drink; and ah! the passive lip I kissed,  
How many kisses might it take—and give!

## XXXVII

For I remember stopping by the way 145  
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:  
And with its all-obliterated tongue  
It murmured: "Gently, ' Brother, gently,  
pray!'"<sup>4</sup>

## XXXVIII

And has not such a story from of old  
Down Man's successive generations rolled  
Of such a clod of saturated earth 151  
Cast by the Maker into human mold?

## XXXIX

And not a drop that from our cups we throw  
For Earth to drink of,<sup>5</sup> but may steal below

<sup>3</sup>Some dividual existence or personality distinct from the Whole. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>4</sup>The clay from which the bowl is made was once man. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>5</sup>The custom of throwing a little wine on the ground before drinking still continues in Persia, and perhaps generally in the East. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>1</sup>One who calls Mahometans to prayer.

<sup>2</sup>Lord of the seventh heaven. (FitzGerald.)

To quench the fire of anguish in some eye  
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago. 156

## XL

As then the Tulip, for her morning sup  
Of heav'nly vintage, from the soil looks up,  
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n  
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup. 160

## XLI

Perplexed no more with Human or Divine,  
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,  
And lose your fingers in the tresses of  
The cypress-slender minister of wine. 164

## XLII

And if the wine you drink, the lip you press,  
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes:  
Think then you are *To-day* what *Yesterday*  
You were—*To-morrow* you shall not be less.

## XLIII

So when that Angel of the Darker Drink  
At last shall find you by the river-brink, 170  
And, offering his cup, invite your soul  
Forth to your lips to quaff—you shall not  
shrink.

## XLIV

Why, if the Soul can fling the dust aside,  
And naked on the air of Heaven ride,  
Were't not a shame—were't not a shame  
for him 175  
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

## XLV

'Tis but a tent where takes his one day's rest  
A Sultán to the realm of Death addressed:  
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh<sup>1</sup>  
Strikes and prepares it for another Guest. 180

## XLVI

And fear not lest Existence closing your  
Account, and mine, should know the like no  
more:  
The Eternal Sáki<sup>2</sup> from that bowl has  
poured  
Millions of bubbles like us, and will pour.

## XLVII

When You and I behind the Veil are past, 185  
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall  
last,  
Which of our coming and departure heeds  
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

<sup>1</sup>Servant.<sup>2</sup>Wine-bearer.

## XLVIII

A moment's halt—a momentary taste  
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste— 190  
And lo! the phantom Caravan has reached  
The NOTHING it set out from . . . Oh,  
make haste!

## XLIX

Would you that spangle of Existence spend  
About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!  
A hair perhaps divides the False and True—  
And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

## L

A hair perhaps divides the False and True:  
Yes; and a single Alif<sup>3</sup> were the clue—  
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-  
house,  
\*And peradventure to THE MASTER too; 200

## LI

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's  
veins  
Running, quicksilver-like eludes your pains;  
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi;<sup>4</sup> and  
They change and perish all—but He remains;

## LII

A moment guessed—then back behind the  
fold 205  
Immersed of darkness round the Drama  
rolled  
Which, for the pastime of Eternity,  
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

## LIII

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor  
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening door,  
You gaze *To-day*, while You are You—  
how then 211  
*To-morrow*, when You shall be You no more?

## LIV

Waste not your hour; nor, in the vain pursuit  
Of This and That endeavor and dispute:  
Better be jocund with the fruitful grape 215  
Than sadden after none, or bitter, fruit.

## LV

You know, my Friends, with what a brave  
carouse  
I made a second marriage in my house;  
Divorced old barren Reason from my bed,  
And took the Daughter of the Vine to spouse.

<sup>3</sup>Letter A, represented by a single stroke.<sup>4</sup>From Fish to Moon. (FitzGerald.)



## LVI

For "Is" and "IS-NOT" though with rule and  
line, 221  
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic, I define,  
Of all that one should care to fathom, I  
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

## LVII

Ah, but my Computations, people say, 225  
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay,  
'Twas only striking from the Calendar  
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

## LVIII

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,  
Came shining through the dusk an Angel  
Shape 230  
Bearing a vessel on his shoulder; and  
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

## LIX

The Grape that can with Logic absolute  
The two-and-seventy jarring sects<sup>1</sup> confute,  
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice 235  
Life's leaden metal into gold transmute;

## LX

The mighty Mahmūd, Allah-breathing Lord,  
That all the misbelieving and black horde<sup>2</sup>  
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul  
Scatters before him with his whirlwind sword.

## LXI

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who  
dare 241  
Blasphe me the twisted tendril as a snare?  
A blessing, we should use it, should we not?  
And if a curse—why, then, Who set it there?

## LXII

I must abjure the balm of life, I must, 245  
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on  
trust,  
Or lured with hope of some diviner drink  
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into dust!

## LXIII

Oh, threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise!  
One thing at least is certain,—*This* Life flies;  
One thing is certain and the rest is lies;  
The flower that once has blown for ever dies.

## LXIV

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who  
Before us passed the door of Darkness  
through,  
Not one returns to tell us of the Road, 255  
Which to discover we must travel too.

## LXV

The revelations of Devout and Learn'd  
Who rose before us, and as prophets burned,  
Are all but stories which, awoke from sleep,  
They told their comrades, and to sleep re-  
turned. 260

## LXVI

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,  
Some letter of that After-life to spell:  
And by and by my Soul returned to me,  
And answered, "I myself am Heav'n and  
Hell"—

## LXVII

Heav'n but the vision of fulfilled desire, 265  
And Hell the shadow from a soul on fire,  
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,  
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

## LXVIII

We are no other than a moving row  
Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go 270  
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern  
held  
In midnight by the Master of the Show;

## LXIX

But helpless Pieces of the game He plays  
Upon this checker-board of nights and days;  
Hither and thither moves, and checks,  
and slays, 275  
And one by one back in the closet lays.

## LXX

The ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,  
But here or there, as strikes the player, goes;  
And He that tossed you down into the field,  
*He* knows about it all—*HE* knows—*HE*  
knows! 280

## LXXI

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your piety nor wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line;  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

## LXXII

And that inverted bowl they call the Sky, 285  
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,  
Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for *It*  
As impotently moves as you or I.

<sup>1</sup>The 72 religions supposed to divide the world. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>2</sup>Alluding to Sultan Mahmūd's conquest of India and its dark people. (FitzGerald.)

## LXXIII

With Earth's first clay they did the last man  
knead, 289  
And there of the last harvest sowed the seed;  
And the first morning of Creation wrote  
What the last dawn of reckoning shall read.

## LXXIV

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare,  
To-morrow's silence, triumph, or despair:  
Drink! for you know not whence you came,  
nor why; 295  
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor  
where.

## LXXV

I tell you this:—When, started from the goal,  
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal  
Of Heav'n, Parwín and Mushtarí<sup>1</sup> they  
flung,  
In my predestined plot of Dust and Soul 300

## LXXVI

The Vine had struck a fiber; which about  
If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout:  
Of my base metal may be filed a key  
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

## LXXVII

And this I know: whether the one True Light  
Kindle to Love, or wrath-consume me quite,  
One flash of It within the Tavern caught  
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

## LXXVIII

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke  
A conscious Something to resent the yoke 310  
Of unpermitted pleasure, under pain  
Of everlasting penalties, if broke!

## LXXIX

What! from his helpless creature be repaid  
Pure gold for what he lent him dross-allayed—  
Sue for a debt he never did contract, 315  
And cannot answer—Oh, the sorry trade!

## LXXX

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin  
Beset the road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not with predestined evil round  
Enmesh, and then impute my fall to sin! 320

## LXXXI

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,  
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:

For all the sin wherewith the face of Man  
Is blackened—Man's forgiveness give—and  
take!

## LXXXII

As under cover of departing day 325  
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán<sup>2</sup> away,  
Once more within the Potter's house alone  
I stood, surrounded by the shapes of clay:

## LXXXIII

Shapes of all sorts and sizes, great and small,  
That stood along the floor and by the wall; 330  
And some loquacious vessels were; and some  
Listened perhaps, but never talked at all.

## LXXXIV

Said one among them: "Surely not in vain  
My substance of the common earth was ta'en  
And to this figure molded, to be broke, 335  
Or trampled back to shapeless earth again."

## LXXXV

Then said a second: "Ne'er a peevish boy  
Would break the bowl from which he drank in  
joy;  
And He that with his hand the vessel made  
Will surely not in after wrath destroy." 340

## LXXXVI

After a momentary silence spake  
Some vessel of a more ungainly make:  
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry—  
What! did the hand, then, of the Potter  
shake?"

## LXXXVII

Whereat some one of the loquacious lot— 345  
I think a Súfi<sup>3</sup> pipkin—waxing hot:  
"All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me, then,  
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

## LXXXVIII

"Why," said another, "some there are who  
tell  
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell 350  
The luckless Pots he marred in making  
—Pish!  
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

## LXXXIX

"Well," murmured one, "let whoso make or  
buy,  
My clay with long oblivion is gone dry:  
But fill me with the old familiar Juice, 355  
Methinks I might recover by and by."

<sup>1</sup>The Pleiads and Jupiter. (FitzGerald.)

<sup>2</sup>The month for fasting.

<sup>3</sup>A pantheist.

## XC

So while the vessels one by one were speaking,  
The little Moon<sup>1</sup> looked in that all were  
seeking;

And then they jogged each other: "Brother!  
Brother!"

Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot<sup>2</sup> a-  
creaking!" 360

## XCI

Ah, with the Grape my fading life provide;  
And wash the body whence the life has died,

And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,  
By some not unfrequented garden-side—

## XCII

That ev'n my buried ashes such a snare 365  
Of vintage shall fling up into the air  
As not a True-believer passing by  
But shall be overtaken unaware.

## XCIII

Indeed, the Idols I have loved so long  
Have done my credit in this World much  
wrong: 370

Have drowned my glory in a shallow cup,  
And sold my reputation for a song.

## XCIV

Indeed, indeed, repentance oft before  
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?

And then, and then came Spring, and  
rose-in-hand 375  
My threadbare penitence apieces tore.

## XCV

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,  
And robbed me of my robe of Honor—Well,

I wonder often what the vintners buy  
One half so precious as the stuff they sell. 380

<sup>1</sup>Signalizing the end of Ramazán.

<sup>2</sup>Used for carrying jars of wine.

## XCVI

Yet ah, that Spring should vanish with the  
rose!

That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript  
should close!

The nightingale that in the branches sang,  
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who  
knows! 384

## XCVII

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield  
One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, revealed—

To which the fainting Traveler might  
spring,

As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

## XCVIII

Would but some wingèd angel, ere too late,  
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate, 390

And make the stern Recorder otherwise  
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

## XCIX

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire  
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,

Would not we shatter it to bits—and then  
Remold it nearer to the Heart's desire! 396

## C

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—  
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;

How oft hereafter rising look for us  
Through this same garden—and for *one* in  
vain! 400

## CI

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass  
Among the guests star-scattered on the grass,

And in your joyous errand reach the spot  
Where I made one—turn down an empty  
glass!

TAMAM<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>The end.



## JOHN RUSKIN (1819-1900)

Ruskin's father was a wine-merchant dealing in sherry. He was a Scotchman, a man of unusual practical ability and of considerable fortune, with conventional views, but possessed of fine taste. He married his first cousin, a woman of great power, with a harsh and deeply religious nature. To them John Ruskin, their only child, was born in London on 8 February, 1819. Few youths have been so completely and so long subjected to the influences of their homes as was Ruskin, and something of the general character of his early years may be gathered from the brief autobiographical passages printed below. After a somewhat irregular course of preparation he entered Christ Church College, Oxford, at the age of eighteen, as a gentleman-commoner. His work at Oxford was interrupted by bad health which forced him to spend a year and a half abroad, chiefly in Italy. He took his B.A. in May, 1842, receiving an honorary fourth class both in classics and in mathematics. His parents had expected him to become a clergyman, and he disappointed them by refusing either to take holy orders or to enter the sherry trade. What he was to do was not yet perhaps entirely clear to himself, yet he had been since boyhood persistently training himself for writing. Almost every day since his seventh year he had been writing poetry, and his exercises in prose composition had begun almost as early. Likewise he had been from youth an enthusiastic lover of the landscape art of J. M. W. Turner, convinced as he was that Turner alone of contemporary artists saw nature truly and painted what he saw, and at the age of seventeen he had written an eloquent, impassioned essay in defense of Turner against adverse criticism. Now, his academic career concluded and his future at least negatively determined, he settled down in the autumn and winter of 1842 to the writing of "Turner and the Ancients," as he at first intended to entitle his book. The title was later changed to *Modern Painters* and the volume was published anonymously in 1843. It caused a sensation in both the artistic and literary worlds, and it was almost immediately recognized that a new master had appeared. Ruskin was, indeed, by his successive volumes to work a veritable revolution in taste and to rise to a position of authority as an art-critic unexampled in England. What he did, said William Morris, was "to let a flood of daylight into the cloud of sham-twaddle which was once the whole substance of art-criticism." And he did this with an assurance, an eloquence, a wealth of ingenious illustration, and a

splendor of language which fairly swept many contemporaries off their feet. The basis of his work, moreover, was exceedingly simple. He preached in his own way essentially the great lesson of Carlyle, by whom he was much influenced;—he preached that better than all things else in the world is truth. He asked of artists only that they should submit themselves, humbly and obediently, to the truth of nature, and told them that in this way, and in this way alone, they could discover the highest inspiration and learn how to use their pencils greatly.

Ruskin was twenty-four when the first volume of *Modern Painters* was published and, despite his manifest genius and his thoughtfulness above his years, he obviously had some things yet to learn. As new chapters in the history of art were opened up to him by travel and study the original plan of *Modern Painters* was changed and expanded, and in addition Ruskin was more than once drawn aside into other work, with the result that the fifth and final volume did not appear until 1860. In the intervening years occurred his unhappy marriage to Euphemia Chalmers Gray, which took place in April, 1848, and which was a few years later annulled on the petition of Mrs. Ruskin. In those years, too, he wrote the *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849)—Truth, Beauty, Power, Sacrifice, Obedience, Labor, Memory—in which he did for the art of building what he had already done for painting, and the *Stones of Venice* (1851-1853), which is, so to say, a practical amplification of the *Seven Lamps*, applying its doctrine to the defense of Gothic architecture.

From the first Ruskin's art-criticism was a consideration of the conditions under which great works of art may come into being, and from the first Ruskin regarded the good, the true, and the beautiful as ultimately one in their nature. In other words, he taught that beauty is at bottom the concomitant or outgrowth of a right and true system of values, and that ugliness consequently must be the expression of a wrong or low or false system of values. And as he went on with his work he saw more and more clearly that this conviction implied that only a good man could be a great artist. Thus it was that the *Seven Lamps* was written to show, as he later explained, "that certain right states of temper and moral feeling were the magic powers by which all good architecture without exception had been produced. The *Stones of Venice* had, from beginning to end, no other aim than to show that the Gothic archi-

ture of Venice had arisen out of, and indicated in all its features, a state of pure national faith and of domestic virtue; and that its Renaissance architecture had arisen out of, and in all its features indicated, a state of concealed national infidelity and of domestic corruption." This, then, is the secret of Ruskin's transition in middle life from the rôle of art-critic to that of social reformer. The two are ordinarily thought of as very different activities, but in Ruskin the social reformer grew naturally, indeed inevitably, out of the art-critic, and to separate them from each other is in his case to misunderstand both. From the late eighteen-fifties until the close of his active life Ruskin gave himself increasingly to social work, and wrote, and spent his money, in the effort to arouse the upper classes to a sense of their responsibilities and to help the poor to rise out of the misery and ugliness which surrounded them. Some of the books which preserve the writings of this period are *Unto this Last*, *Munera Pulveris*,

*Time and Tide*, *Fors Clavigera*, *Sesame and Lilies*, and *The Crown of Wild Olive*. In these books Ruskin no doubt often wrote rashly, as was indeed his habit in all his work, and he aroused bitter feeling which at the time seemed to go far towards destroying the reputation he had previously built up for himself. Time has, however, been remarkably on Ruskin's side, and it is to-day an astonishing and illuminating thing to count up for one's self the number of Ruskin's one-time social heresies which have since become accepted commonplaces.

In his later life Ruskin was for some years the Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford, where his lectures drew remarkable audiences. After his retirement from Oxford he wrote those autobiographical sketches which were published under the title *Præterita*. He died on 20 January, 1900. He had once said: "Life without industry is guilt, and industry without art is brutality," and this sentence sums up better than could any other words the meaning of all his work.

## PRÆTERITA

### EARLY READING AND SUMMER TRAVEL<sup>1</sup>

I AM, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school;—Walter Scott's school, that is to say, and Homer's. I name these two out of the numberless great Tory writers, because they were my own two masters. I had Walter Scott's novels, and the *Iliad* (Pope's translation), for constant reading when I was a child, on week-days: on Sunday, their effect was tempered by *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*; my mother having it deeply in her heart to make an evangelical clergyman of me. Fortunately, I had an aunt more evangelical than my mother; and my aunt gave me cold mutton for Sunday's dinner, which—as I much preferred it hot—greatly diminished the influence of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and the end of the matter was, that I got all the noble imaginative teaching of Defoe and Bunyan, and yet—am not an evangelical clergyman.

I had, however, still better teaching than theirs, and that compulsorily, and every day of the week.

Walter Scott and Pope's Homer were reading of my own election, and my mother forced

me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters of the Bible by heart; as well as to read it every syllable through, aloud, hard names and all, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, about once a year: and to that discipline—patient, accurate, and resolute—I owe, not only a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally serviceable, but much of my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature. From Walter Scott's novels I might easily, as I grew older, have fallen to other people's novels; and Pope might, perhaps, have led me to take Johnson's English, or Gibbon's, as types of language; but once knowing the 32nd of Deuteronomy, the 119th Psalm, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, the Sermon on the Mount, and most of the Apocalypse, every syllable by heart, and having always a way of thinking with myself what words meant, it was not possible for me, even in the foolish times of youth, to write entirely superficial or formal English; and the affectation of trying to write like Hooker and George Herbert was the most innocent I could have fallen into.

From my own chosen masters, then, Scott and Homer, I learned the Toryism which my best after-thought has only served to confirm.

That is to say, a most sincere love of kings, and dislike of everybody who attempted to disobey them. Only, both by Homer and Scott, I was taught strange ideas about kings, which I find for the present much obsolete; for, I perceived that both the author of the

<sup>1</sup>*Præterita* (things gone by) was published in chapters at irregular intervals from 1885 to 1889. This passage is from vol. I, chap. i, which consists of slightly revised passages from *Fors Clavigera*, written 1871–1875.

*Iliad* and the author of *Waverley* made their kings, or king-loving persons, do harder work than anybody else. Tydides or Idomeneus always killed twenty Trojans to other people's one, and Redgauntlet speared more salmon 5 than any of the Solway fishermen;<sup>1</sup> and—which was particularly a subject of admiration to me—I observed that they not only did more, but in proportion to their doings got less, than other people—nay, that the best of 10 them were even ready to govern for nothing! and let their followers divide any quantity of spoil or profit. Of late it has seemed to me that the idea of a king has become exactly the contrary of this, and that it has been supposed 15 the duty of superior persons generally to govern less, and get more, than anybody else. So that it was, perhaps, quite as well that in those early days my contemplation of existent kingship was a very distant one.

The aunt who gave me cold mutton on Sundays was my father's sister: she lived at Bridge-end, in the town of Perth, and had a garden full of gooseberry-bushes, sloping down to the Tay, with a door opening to the 25 water, which ran past it, clear-brown over the pebbles three or four feet deep; swift-eddy, an infinite thing for a child to look down into.

My father began business as a wine- 30 merchant, with no capital, and a considerable amount of debts bequeathed him by my grandfather. He accepted the bequest, and paid them all before he began to lay by anything for himself,—for which his best friends 35 called him a fool, and I, without expressing any opinion as to his wisdom, which I knew in such matters to be at least equal to mine, have written on the granite slab over his grave that he was "an entirely honest merchant." 40 As days went on he was able to take a house in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, No. 54 (the windows of it, fortunately for me, commanded a view of a marvelous iron post, out of which the water-carts were filled through 45 beautiful little trap-doors, by pipes like boaconstrictors; and I was never weary of contemplating that mystery, and the delicious dripping consequent); and as years went on, and I came to be four or five years old, he 50 could command a postchaise and pair for two

months in the summer, by help of which, with my mother and me, he went the round of his country customers (who liked to see the principal of the house his own traveler); so that, at a jog-trot pace, and through the panoramic opening of the four windows of a postchaise, made more panoramic still to me because my seat was a little bracket in front (for we used to hire the chaise regularly for the two months 10 out of Long Acre, and so could have it bracketed and pocketed as we liked), I saw all the high-roads, and most of the cross ones, of England and Wales; and great part of lowland Scotland, as far as Perth, where every other 15 year we spent the whole summer: and I used to read the *Abbot* at Kinross, and the *Monastery* in Glen Farg, which I confused with "Glendearg," and thought that the White Lady had as certainly lived by the streamlet 20 in that glen of the Ochils, as the Queen of Scots in the island of Loch Leven.

To my farther great benefit, as I grew older, I thus saw nearly all the noblemen's houses in England; in reverent and healthy delight of 25 uncovetous admiration,—perceiving, as soon as I could perceive any political truth at all, that it was probably much happier to live in a small house, and have Warwick Castle to be astonished at, than to live in Warwick Castle and have nothing to be astonished at; but that, at all events, it would not make Brunswick Square in the least more pleasantly habitable, to pull Warwick Castle down. And at this day, though I have kind invitations enough to 30 visit America, I could not, even for a couple of months, live in a country so miserable as to possess no castles.

Nevertheless, having formed my notion of kingship chiefly from the FitzJames of the 40 *Lady of the Lake*, and of noblesse from the Douglas there, and the Douglas in *Marmion*, a painful wonder soon arose in my child-mind, why the castles should now be always empty. Tantallon was there; but no Archibald of Angus:—Stirling, but no Knight of Snow-doun. The galleries and gardens of England were beautiful to see—but his Lordship and her Ladyship were always in town, said the housekeepers and gardeners. Deep yearning took hold of me for a kind of "Restoration," which I began slowly to feel that Charles the Second had not altogether effected, though I 50 always wore a gilded oak-apple very piously in my button-hole on the 29th of May. It

<sup>1</sup>For Diomed (son of Tydeus) see such a passage in Pope's *Iliad* as x, 500; for Idomeneus, xiii, 457. For Redgauntlet see Letter 4 of Scott's novel of the same name.



seemed to me that Charles the Second's Restoration had been, as compared with the Restoration I wanted, much as that gilded oak-apple to a real apple. And as I grew wiser, the desire for sweet pippins instead of bitter ones, and Living Kings instead of dead ones, appeared to me rational as well as romantic; and gradually it has become the main purpose of my life to grow pippins, and its chief hope, to see Kings.

### DAILY LIFE AT HERNE HILL<sup>1</sup>

WHEN I was about four years old my father found himself able to buy the lease of a house on Herne Hill, a rustic eminence four miles south of the "Standard in Cornhill";<sup>2</sup> of which the leafy seclusion remains, in all essential points of character, unchanged to this day: certain Gothic splendors, lately indulged in by our wealthier neighbors, being the only serious innovations; and these are so graciously concealed by the fine trees of their grounds, that the passing viator<sup>3</sup> remains unappalled by them; and I can still walk up and down the piece of road between the Fox tavern and the Herne Hill station, imagining myself four years old.

Our house was the northernmost of a group which stand accurately on the top or dome of the hill, where the ground is for a small space level, as the snows are (I understand), on the dome of Mont Blanc; presently falling, however, in what may be, in the London clay formation, considered a precipitous slope, to our valley of Chamouni (or of Dulwich) on the east; and with a softer descent into Cold Harbor-lane on the west: on the south, no less beautifully declining to the dale of the Effra (doubtless shortened from Effrena, signifying the "Unbridled" river; recently, I regret to say, bricked over for the convenience of Mr. Biffin, chemist, and others); while on the north, prolonged indeed with slight depression some half mile or so, and receiving, in the parish of Lambeth, the chivalric title of "Champion Hill," it plunges down at last to efface itself in the plains of Peckham, and the rural barbarism of Goose Green.

<sup>1</sup>From vol. I, chap. ii, the greater part of which consists of slightly revised passages from *Fors Clavigera*, written 1873-1875.

<sup>2</sup>A water-standard built in 1582 which stood near the junction of Cornhill with Leadenhall Street.

<sup>3</sup>Traveler.

The group, of which our house was the quarter, consisted of two precisely similar partner-couples of houses, gardens and all to match; still the two highest blocks of buildings seen from Norwood on the crest of the ridge; so that the house itself, three-stories, with garrets above, commanded, in those comparatively smokeless days, a very notable view from its garret windows, of the Norwood hills on one side, and the winter sunrise over them; and of the valley of the Thames on the other, with Windsor telescopically clear in the distance, and Harrow, conspicuous always in fine weather to open vision against the summer sunset. It had front and back garden in sufficient proportion to its size; the front, richly set with old evergreens, and well-grown lilac and laburnum; the back, seventy yards long by twenty wide, renowned over all the hill for its pears and apples, which had been chosen with extreme care by our predecessor (shame on me to forget the name of a man to whom I owe so much!)-and possessing also a strong old mulberry tree, a tall white-heart cherry tree, a black Kentish one, and an almost unbroken hedge, all round, of alternate gooseberry and currant bush; decked, in due season (for the ground was wholly beneficent), with magical splendor of abundant fruit: fresh green, soft amber, and rough-bristled crimson bending the spinous branches; clustered pearl and pendent ruby joyfully discoverable under the large leaves that looked like vine.

The differences of primal importance which I observed between the nature of this garden, and that of Eden, as I had imagined it, were, that, in this one, *all* the fruit was forbidden; and there were no companionable beasts: in other respects the little domain answered every purpose of Paradise to me; and the climate, in that cycle of our years, allowed me to pass most of my life in it. My mother never gave me more to learn than she knew I could easily get learned, if I set myself honestly to work, by twelve o'clock. She never allowed anything to disturb me when my task was set; if it was not said rightly by twelve o'clock, I was kept in till I knew it, and in general, even when Latin Grammar came to supplement the Psalms, I was my own master for at least an hour before half-past one dinner, and for the rest of the afternoon.

My mother, herself finding her chief per-

sonal pleasure in her flowers, was often planting or pruning beside me, at least if I chose to stay beside *her*. I never thought of doing anything behind her back which I would not have done before her face; and her presence was therefore no restraint to me; but, also, no particular pleasure, for, from having always been left so much alone, I had generally my own little affairs to see after; and, on the whole, by the time I was seven years old, was already getting too independent, mentally, even of my father and mother; and, having nobody else to be dependent upon, began to lead a very small, perky, contented, conceited, Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life, in the central point which it appeared to me (as it must naturally appear to geometrical animals) that I occupied in the universe.

This was partly the fault of my father's modesty; and partly of his pride. He had so much more confidence in my mother's judgment as to such matters than in his own, that he never ventured even to help, much less to cross her, in the conduct of my education; on the other hand, in the fixed purpose of making an ecclesiastical gentleman of me, with the superfinest of manners, and access to the highest circles of fleshly and spiritual society, the visits to Croydon, where I entirely loved my aunt,<sup>1</sup> and young baker-cousins, became rarer and more rare: the society of our neighbors on the hill could not be had without breaking up our regular and sweetly selfish manner of living; and on the whole, I had nothing animate to care for, in a childish way, but myself, some nests of ants, which the gardener would never leave undisturbed for me, and a sociable bird or two; though I never had the sense or perseverance to make one really tame. But that was partly because, if ever I managed to bring one to be the least trustful of me, the cats got it.

Under these circumstances, what powers of imagination I possessed, either fastened themselves on inanimate things—the sky, the leaves, and pebbles, observable within the walls of Eden—or caught at any opportunity of flight into regions of romance, compatible with the objective realities of existence in the nineteenth century, within a mile and a quarter of Camberwell Green.

Herein my father, happily, though with no definite intention other than of pleasing me, when he found he could do so without infringing any of my mother's rules, became my guide. I was particularly fond of watching him shave; and was always allowed to come into his room in the morning (under the one in which I am now writing), to be the motionless witness of that operation. Over his dressing-table hung one of his own water-color drawings, made under the teaching of the elder Nasmyth; I believe, at the High School of Edinburgh. It was done in the early manner of tinting, which, just about the time when my father was at the High School, Dr. Munro<sup>2</sup> was teaching Turner; namely, in gray under-tints of Prussian blue and British ink, washed with warm color afterward on the lights. It represented Conway Castle, with its Frith, and, in the foreground, a cottage, a fisherman, and a boat at the water's edge.

When my father had finished shaving, he always told me a story about this picture. The custom began without any initial purpose of his, in consequence of my troublesome curiosity whether the fisherman lived in the cottage, and where he was going to in the boat. It being settled, for peace' sake, that he *did* live in the cottage, and was going in the boat to fish near the castle, the plot of the drama afterward gradually thickened; and became, I believe, involved with that of the tragedy of *Douglas*, and of the *Castle Specter*,<sup>3</sup> in both of which pieces my father had performed in private theatricals, before my mother, and a select Edinburgh audience, when he was a boy of sixteen, and she, at grave twenty, a model housekeeper, and very scornful and religiously suspicious of theatricals. But she was never weary of telling me, in later years, how beautiful my father looked in his Highland dress, with the high black feathers.

In the afternoons, when my father returned (always punctually) from his business, he dined, at half-past four, in the front parlor, my mother sitting beside him to hear the events of the day, and give counsel and encouragement with respect to the same;—

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Munro (1759–1833), a physician and an early patron of J. M. W. Turner (1775–1851), the landscape artist, who was responsible for Ruskin's beginning *Modern Painters*.

<sup>3</sup>The former by John Home (published in 1757), the latter by M. G. ("Monk") Lewis, played at Drury Lane Theater in 1798.

<sup>1</sup>The sister of Ruskin's mother, who married a baker in Croydon named Richardson.

chiefly the last, for my father was apt to be vexed if orders for sherry fell the least short of their due standard, even for a day or two. I was never present at this time, however, and only avouch what I relate by hearsay and probable conjecture; for between four and six it would have been a grave misdemeanor in me if I so much as approached the parlor door. After that, in summer time, we were all in the garden as long as the day lasted; tea under the white-heart cherry tree; or in winter and rough weather, at six o'clock in the drawing-room,—I having my cup of milk, and slice of bread-and-butter, in a little recess, with a table in front of it, wholly sacred to me; and in which I remained in the evenings as an Idol in a niche, while my mother knitted, and my father read to her,—and to me, so far as I chose to listen.

The series of the Waverley novels, then drawing towards its close, was still the chief source of delight in all households caring for literature; and I can no more recollect the time when I did not know them than when I did not know the Bible; but I have still a vivid remembrance of my father's intense expression of sorrow mixed with scorn, as he threw down *Count Robert of Paris*, after reading three or four pages; and knew that the life of Scott was ended: the scorn being a very complex and bitter feeling in him,—partly, indeed, of the book itself, but chiefly of the wretches who were tormenting and selling the wrecked intellect, and not a little, deep down, of the subtle dishonesty which had essentially caused the ruin. My father never could forgive Scott his concealment of the Ballantyne partnership.

Such being the salutary pleasures of Herne Hill, I have next with deeper gratitude to chronicle what I owe to my mother for the resolutely consistent lessons which so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make every word of them familiar to my ear in habitual music,—yet in that familiarity revered, as transcending all thought, and ordaining all conduct.

This she effected, not by her own sayings or personal authority; but simply by compelling me to read the book thoroughly, for myself. As soon as I was able to read with fluency, she began a course of Bible work with me, which never ceased till I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses with me,

watching, at first, every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse, if within my reach, rightly, and energetically. It might be beyond me altogether; that she did not care about; but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end.

In this way she began with the first verse of Genesis, and went straight through, to the last verse of the Apocalypse; hard names, numbers, Levitical law, and all; and began again at Genesis the next day. If a name was hard, the better the exercise in pronunciation,—if the chapter was tiresome, the better lesson in patience,—if loathsome, the better lesson in faith that there was some use in its being so outspoken. After our chapters (from two to three a day, according to their length, the first thing after breakfast, and no interruption from servants allowed,—none from visitors, who either joined in the reading or had to stay upstairs,—and none from any visitings or excursions, except real traveling), I had to learn a few verses by heart, or repeat, to make sure I had not lost, something of what was already known; and, with the chapters thus gradually possessed from the first word to the last, I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scottish paraphrases, which are good, melodious, and forceful verse; and to which, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound.

It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive—the 119th Psalm—has now become of all the most precious to me, in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the Law of God, in opposition to the abuse of it by modern preachers of what they imagine to be His gospel.

But it is only by deliberate effort that I recall the long morning hours of toil, as regular as sunrise,—toil on both sides equal—by which, year after year, my mother forced me to learn these paraphrases, and chapters (the eighth of 1st Kings being one—try it, good reader, in a leisure hour!), allowing not so much as a syllable to be missed or misplaced; while every sentence was required to be said over and over again till she was satisfied with the accent of it. I recollect a struggle between us on



about three weeks, concerning the accent of the "of" in the lines

Shall any following spring revive  
The ashes of the urn?<sup>1</sup>—

I insisting, partly in childish obstinacy, and partly in true instinct for rhythm (being wholly careless on the subject both of urns and their contents), on reciting it with an accented *of*. It was not, I say, till after three 10 weeks' labor, that my mother got the accent lightened on the "of" and laid on the ashes, to her mind. But had it taken three years she would have done it, having once undertaken to do it. And, assuredly, had she not 15 done it,—well, there's no knowing what would have happened; but I'm very thankful she *did*.

I have just opened my oldest (in use) Bible, —a small, closely, and very neatly printed 20 volume it is, printed in Edinburgh by Sir D. Hunter Blair and J. Bruce, Printers of the King's Most Excellent Majesty, in 1816. Yellow, now, with age; and flexible, but not unclean, with much use; except that the lower 25 corners of the pages at 8th of 1st Kings, and 32nd Deuteronomy, are worn somewhat thin and dark, the learning of these two chapters having cost me much pains. My mother's list of the chapters with which, thus learned, 30 she established my soul in life, has just fallen out of it. I will take what indulgence the incurious reader can give me, for printing the list thus accidentally occurrent:—

Exodus,	chapters	15th and 20th.
2 Samuel,	"	1st, from 17th verse to end.
1 Kings,	"	8th.
Psalms,	"	23rd, 32nd, 90th, 91st, 103rd, 112th, 119th, 139th.
Proverbs,	"	2nd, 3rd, 8th, 12th.
Isaiah,	"	58th.
Matthew,	"	5th, 6th, 7th.
Acts,	"	26th.
1 Corinthians,	"	13th, 15th.
James,	"	4th.
Revelation,	"	5th, 6th.

And, truly, though I have picked up the elements of a little further knowledge—in mathematics, meteorology, and the like, in after

life,—and owe not a little to the teaching of many people, this maternal installation of my mind in that property of chapters I count very confidently the most precious, and, on the 5 whole, the one *essential* part of all my education.

## MODERN PAINTERS

### DEFINITION OF GREATNESS IN ART<sup>2</sup>

IN THE 15th Lecture of Sir Joshua Reynolds,<sup>3</sup> incidental notice is taken of the distinction between those excellences in the painter which belong to him *as such*, and those which belong to him in common with all men of intellect, the general and exalted powers of which art is the evidence and expression, not the subject. But the distinction is not there dwelt upon as it should be, for it is owing to the slight attention ordinarily paid to it, that criticism is open to every form of coxcombry, and liable to every phase of error. It is a distinction on which depend all sound judgment of the rank of the artist, and all just appreciation of the dignity of art.

Painting, or art generally, as such, with all its technicalities, difficulties, and particular ends, is nothing but a noble and expressive language, invaluable as the vehicle of thought, but by itself nothing. He who has learned what is commonly considered the whole art of painting, that is, the art of representing any natural object faithfully, has as yet only learned the language by which his thoughts 35 are to be expressed. He has done just as much towards being that which we ought to respect as a great painter, as a man who has learned how to express himself grammatically and melodiously has towards being a great 40 poet. The language is, indeed, more difficult of acquirement in the one case than in the other, and possesses more power of delighting the sense, while it speaks to the intellect; but it is, nevertheless, nothing more than lan- 45 guage, and all those excellences which are peculiar to the painter as such, are merely what rhythm, melody, precision, and force are in the words of the orator and the poet, necessary to their greatness, but not the tests 50 of their greatness. It is not by the mode of

<sup>2</sup>Vol. I. (published in 1843), part I, section 1, chapter 2.

<sup>3</sup>Reynolds delivered a series of lectures, or discourses, as they are usually called, during his presidency of the Royal Academy.

<sup>1</sup>By John Logan, in one of the *Scottish Church Paraphrases*.

representing and saying, but by what is represented and said, that the respective greatness either of the painter or the writer is to be finally determined.

Speaking with strict propriety, therefore, we should call a man a great painter only as he excelled in precision and force in the language of lines, and a great versifier, as he excelled in precision and force in the language of words. A great poet would then be a term strictly, and in precisely the same sense, applicable to both, if warranted by the character of the images or thoughts which each in their respective languages conveyed.

Take, for instance, one of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen:—the “Old Shepherd’s Chief-mourner.”<sup>1</sup> Here the exquisite execution of the glossy and crisp hair of the dog, the bright sharp touching of the green bough beside it, the clear<sup>2</sup> painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket, are language—language clear and expressive in the highest degree. But the close pressure of the dog’s breast against the wood, the convulsive clinging of the paws, which has dragged the blanket off the trestle, the total powerlessness of the head laid, close and motionless, upon its folds, the fixed and tearful fall of the eye in its utter hopelessness, the rigidity of repose which marks that there has been no motion nor change in the trance of agony since the last blow was struck on the coffin-lid, the quietness and gloom of the chamber, the spectacles marking the place where the Bible was last closed, indicating how lonely has been the life, how unwatched the departure, of him who is now laid solitary in his sleep;—these are all thoughts—thoughts by which the picture is separated at once from hundreds of equal merit, as far as mere painting goes, by which it ranks as a work of high art, and stamps its author, not as the neat imitator of the texture of a skin, or the fold of a drapery, but as the Man of Mind.

It is not, however, always easy, either in painting or literature, to determine where the influence of language stops, and where that of thought begins. Many thoughts are so dependent upon the language in which they

are clothed, that they would lose half their beauty if otherwise expressed. But the highest thoughts are those which are least dependent on language, and the dignity of any composition, and praise to which it is entitled, are in exact proportion to its independency of language or expression. A composition is indeed usually most perfect, when to such intrinsic dignity is added all that expression can do to attract and adorn; but in every case of supreme excellence this all becomes as nothing. We are more gratified by the simplest lines or words which can suggest the idea in its own naked beauty, than by the robe and the gem which conceal while they decorate; we are better pleased to feel by their absence how little they could bestow, than by their presence how much they can destroy.

There is therefore a distinction to be made between what is ornamental in language and what is expressive. That part of it which is necessary to the embodying and conveying of the thought is worthy of respect and attention as necessary to excellence, though not the test of it. But that part of it which is decorative has little more to do with the intrinsic excellence of the picture than the frame or the varnishing of it. And this caution in distinguishing between the ornamental and the expressive is peculiarly necessary in painting: for in the language of words it is nearly impossible for that which is not expressive to be beautiful, except by mere rhythm or melody, any sacrifice to which is immediately stigmatized as error. But the beauty of mere language in painting is not only very attractive and entertaining to the spectator, but requires for its attainment no small exertion of mind and devotion of time by the artist. Hence, in art, men have frequently fancied that they were becoming rhetoricians and poets when they were only learning to speak melodiously, and the judge has over and over again advanced to the honor of authors those who were never more than ornamental writing-masters.

Most pictures of the Dutch school, for instance, excepting always those of Rubens, Vandyke, and Rembrandt, are ostentatious exhibitions of the artist’s power of speech, the clear and vigorous elocution of useless and senseless words; while the early efforts of Cimabue<sup>3</sup> and Giotto<sup>4</sup> are the burning mes-

<sup>1</sup>By Sir Edwin Landseer, now in the Victoria and Albert South Kensington Museum.

<sup>2</sup>“Clear” is printed in all the editions, and so is retained here, but Ruskin originally wrote “clever” and probably never detected the misprint.

<sup>3</sup>Florentine painter (1240?–1302?).

<sup>4</sup>Florentine painter and architect (1267?–1337?).

sages of prophecy, delivered by the stammering lips of infants. It is not by ranking the former as more than mechanics, or the latter as less than artists, that the taste of the multitude, always awake to the lowest pleasures which art can bestow, and blunt to the highest, is to be formed or elevated. It must be the part of the judicious critic carefully to distinguish what is language, and what is thought, and to rank and praise pictures chiefly for the latter, considering the former as a totally inferior excellence, and one which cannot be compared with nor weighed against thought in any way or in any degree whatsoever. The picture which has the nobler and more numerous ideas, however awkwardly expressed, is a greater and a better picture than that which has the less noble and less numerous ideas, however beautifully expressed. No weight, nor mass, nor beauty of execution, can outweigh one grain or fragment of thought. Three pen-strokes of Raffaëlle are a greater and a better picture than the most finished work that ever Carlo Dolci<sup>1</sup> polished into inanity. A finished work of a great artist is only better than its sketch, if the sources of pleasure belonging to color and realization—valuable in themselves—are so employed as to increase the impressiveness of the thought. But if one atom of thought has vanished, all color, all finish, all execution, all ornament, are too dearly bought. Nothing but thought can pay for thought, and the instant that the increasing refinement or finish of the picture begins to be paid for by the loss of the faintest shadow of an idea, that instant all refinement or finish is an excrescence and a deformity.

Yet although in all our speculations on art, language is thus to be distinguished from, and held subordinate to, that which it conveys, we must still remember that there are certain ideas inherent in language itself, and that, strictly speaking, every pleasure connected with art has in it some reference to the intellect. The mere sensual pleasure of the eye, received from the most brilliant piece of coloring, is as nothing to that which it receives from a crystal prism, except as it depends on our perception of a certain meaning and intended arrangement of color, which has been the subject of intellect. Nay, the term

idea, according to Locke's<sup>2</sup> definition of it, will extend even to the sensual impressions themselves as far as they are "things which the mind occupies itself about in thinking"; that is, not as they are felt by the eye only, but as they are received by the mind through the eye. So that, if I say that the greatest picture is that which conveys to the mind of the spectator the greatest number of the greatest ideas, I have a definition which will include as subjects of comparison every pleasure which art is capable of conveying. If I were to say, on the contrary, that the best picture was that which most closely imitated nature, I should assume that art could only please by imitating nature; and I should cast out of the pale of criticism those parts of works of art which are not imitative, that is to say, intrinsic beauties of color and form, and those works of art wholly, which, like the Arabesques of Raffaëlle in the Loggias,<sup>3</sup> are not imitative at all. Now, I want a definition of art wide enough to include all its varieties of aim. I do not say, therefore, that the art is greatest which gives most pleasure, because perhaps there is some art whose end is to teach, and not to please. I do not say that the art is greatest which teaches us most, because perhaps there is some art whose end is to please, and not to teach. I do not say that the art is greatest which imitates best, because perhaps there is some art whose end is to create and not to imitate. But I say that the art is greatest which conveys to the mind of the spectator, by any means whatsoever, the greatest number of the greatest ideas; and I call an idea great in proportion as it is received by a higher faculty of the mind, and as it more fully occupies, and in occupying, exercises and exalts, the faculty by which it is received.

If this, then, be the definition of great art, that of a great artist naturally follows. He is the greatest artist who has embodied, in the sum of his works, the greatest number of the greatest ideas.

#### LA RICCIA<sup>4</sup>

THERE is, in the first room of the National Gallery, a landscape attributed to Gaspar

<sup>1</sup>John Locke (1632-1704). The following quotation comes from Bk. II, chap. i, of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

<sup>2</sup>Of the Vatican, Rome.

<sup>3</sup>Volume I, part II, section 2, from chapter 2, "Of Truth of Color."

<sup>4</sup>Tuscan painter (1616-1686).



Poussin,<sup>1</sup> called sometimes Aricia, sometimes Le or La Riccia, according to the fancy of catalogue printers. Whether it can be supposed to resemble the ancient Aricia, now La Riccia, close to Albano, I will not take upon me to determine, seeing that most of the towns of these old masters are quite as like one place as another; but, at any rate, it is a town on a hill, wooded with two-and-thirty bushes, of very uniform size, and possessing about the same number of leaves each. These bushes are all painted in with one dull opaque brown, becoming very slightly greenish toward the lights, and discover in one place a bit of rock, which of course would in nature have been cool and gray beside the lustrous hues of foliage, and which, therefore, being moreover completely in shade, is consistently and scientifically painted of a very clear, pretty, and positive brick red, the only thing like color in the picture. The foreground is a piece of road which, in order to make allowance for its greater nearness, for its being completely in light, and, it may be presumed, for the quantity of vegetation usually present on carriage-roads, is given in a very cool green gray; and the truth of the picture is completed by a number of dots in the sky on the right, with a stalk to them, of a sober and similar brown.<sup>2</sup>

Not long ago, I was slowly descending this very bit of carriage-road, the first turn after you leave Albano, not a little impeded by the worthy successors of the ancient prototypes of Veiento.<sup>3</sup> It had been wild weather when I left Rome, and all across the Campagna the clouds were sweeping in sulphurous blue, with a clap of thunder or two, and breaking gleams of sun along the Claudian aqueduct lighting up the infinity of its arches like the bridge of chaos. But as I climbed the long slope of the Alban Mount, the storm swept finally to the north, and the noble outline of the domes of Albano, and graceful darkness of its ilex grove rose against pure streaks of alternate blue and amber; the upper sky gradually flushing through the last fragments

of rain-cloud in deep palpitating azure, half ether and half dew. The noonday sun came slanting down the rocky slopes of La Riccia, and their masses of entangled and tall foliage, whose autumnal tints were mixed with the wet verdure of a thousand evergreens, were penetrated with it as with rain. I cannot call it color, it was conflagration. Purple, and crimson, and scarlet, like the curtains of God's tabernacle, the rejoicing trees sank into the valley in showers of light, every separate leaf quivering with buoyant and burning life; each, as it turned to reflect or to transmit the sunbeam, first a torch and then an emerald. Far up into the recesses of the valley, the green vistas arched like the hollows of mighty waves of some crystalline sea, with the arbutus flowers dashed along their flanks for foam, and silver flakes of orange spray tossed into the air around them, breaking over the gray walls of rock into a thousand separate stars, fading and kindling alternately as the weak wind lifted and let them fall. Every glade of grass burned like the golden floor of heaven, opening in sudden gleams as the foliage broke and closed above it, as sheet-lightning opens in a cloud at sunset; the motionless masses of dark rock—dark though flushed with scarlet lichen, casting their quiet shadows across its restless radiance, the fountain underneath them filling its marble hollow with blue mist and fitful sound; and over all, the multitudinous bars of amber and rose, the sacred clouds that have no darkness, and only exist to illumine, were seen in fathomless intervals between the solemn and orbéd repose of the stone pines, passing to lose themselves in the last, white, blinding luster of the measureless line where the Campagna melted into the blaze of the sea.

#### OF MODERN LANDSCAPE<sup>4</sup>

WE TURN our eyes, therefore, as boldly and as quickly as may be, from these serene fields and skies of mediæval art,<sup>5</sup> to the most characteristic examples of modern landscape. And, I believe, the first thing that will strike us, or that ought to strike us, is their *cloudiness*.

Out of perfect light and motionless air, we find ourselves on a sudden brought under somber skies, and into drifting wind; and, with

<sup>1</sup>French landscape painter (1613-1675), brother-in-law and pupil of the more famous Nicolas Poussin.

<sup>2</sup>It should be said that this picture was very dirty when Ruskin wrote the first volume of *Modern Painters*. In 1880 it was cleaned and varnished.

<sup>3</sup>I.e., by beggars (Ruskin refers to a passage in Juvenal—*Sat.*, IV, 116—where, however, it is one Catullus, and not Veiento, who is described as fit only to beg alms on the Arician road).

<sup>4</sup>Volume III (published in 1856), part IV, from chapter 16. The preceding chapter is entitled "Of Mediæval Landscape."

fickle sunbeams flashing in our face, or utterly drenched with sweep of rain, we are reduced to track the changes of the shadows on the grass, or watch the rents of twilight through angry cloud. And we find that whereas all the pleasure of the medieval was in *stability*, *definiteness*, and *luminousness*, we are expected to rejoice in darkness, and triumph in mutability; to lay the foundation of happiness in things which momentarily change or fade; and to expect the utmost satisfaction and instruction from what it is impossible to arrest, and difficult to comprehend.

We find, however, together with this general delight in breeze and darkness, much attention to the real form of clouds, and careful drawing of effects of mist; so that the appearance of objects, as seen through it, becomes a subject of science with us; and the faithful representation of that appearance is made of primal importance, under the name of aerial perspective. The aspects of sunset and sunrise, with all their attendant phenomena of cloud and mist, are watchfully delineated; and in ordinary daylight landscape, the sky is considered of so much importance, that a principal mass of foliage, or a whole foreground, is unhesitatingly thrown into shade merely to bring out the form of a white cloud. So that, if a general and characteristic name were needed for modern landscape art, none better could be invented than "the service of clouds."

And this name would, unfortunately, be characteristic of our art in more ways than one. In the last chapter, I said that all the Greeks spoke kindly about the clouds, except Aristophanes; and he, I am sorry to say (since his report is so unfavorable), is the only Greek who had studied them attentively. He tells us, first, that they are "great goddesses to idle men"; then, that they are "mistresses of disputings, and logic, and monstrosities, and noisy chattering"; declares that whoso believes in their divinity must first disbelieve in Jupiter, and place supreme power in the hands of an unknown god "Whirlwind"; and, finally, he displays their influence over the mind of one of their disciples, in his sudden desire "to speak ingeniously concerning smoke."

There is, I fear, an infinite truth in this Aristophanic judgment applied to our modern cloud-worship. Assuredly, much of the love

of mystery in our romances, our poetry, our art, and, above all, in our metaphysics, must come under that definition so long ago given by the great Greek, "speaking ingeniously concerning smoke." And much of the instinct, which, partially developed in painting, may be now seen throughout every mode of exertion of mind,—the easily encouraged doubt, easily excited curiosity, habitual agitation, and delight in the changing and the marvelous, as opposed to the old quiet serenity of social custom and religious faith,—is again deeply defined in those few words, the "dethroning of Jupiter," the "coronation of the whirlwind."

Nor of whirlwind merely, but also of darkness or ignorance respecting all stable facts. That darkening of the foreground to bring out the white cloud, is, in one aspect of it, a type of the subjection of all plain and positive fact, to what is uncertain and unintelligible. And, as we examine farther into the matter, we shall be struck by another great difference between the old and modern landscape, namely, that in the old no one ever thought of drawing anything but as well as *he could*. That might not be *well*, as we have seen in the case of rocks; but it was as well as *he could*, and always distinctly. Leaf, or stone, or animal, or man, it was equally drawn with care and clearness, and its essential characters shown. If it was an oak tree, the acorns were drawn; if a flint pebble, its veins were drawn; if an arm of the sea, its fish were drawn; if a group of figures, their faces and dresses were drawn—to the very last subtlety of expression and end of thread that could be got into the space, far off or near. But now our ingenuity is all "concerning smoke." Nothing is truly drawn but that; all else is vague, slight, imperfect; got with as little pains as possible. You examine your closest foreground, and find no leaves; your largest oak, and find no acorns; your human figure, and find a spot of red paint instead of a face; and in all this, again and again, the Aristophanic words come true, and the clouds seem to be "great goddesses to idle men."

The next thing that will strike us, after this love of clouds, is the love of liberty. Whereas the medieval was always shutting himself into castles, and behind fosses, and drawing brick-work neatly, and beds of flowers primly, our painters delight in getting to the open fields

<sup>1</sup>See the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, II, 316-318, 320, and 360.

and moors; abhor all hedges and moats; never paint anything but free-growing trees, and rivers gliding "at their own sweet will";<sup>1</sup> eschew formality down to the smallest detail; break and displace the brickwork which the medieval would have carefully cemented; leave unpruned the thickets he would have delicately trimmed; and, carrying the love of liberty even to license, and the love of wildness even to ruin, take pleasure at last in every aspect of age and desolation which emancipates the objects of nature from the government of men;—on the castle wall displacing its tapestry with ivy, and spreading, through the garden, the bramble for the rose.

Connected with this love of liberty we find a singular manifestation of love of mountains, and see our painters traversing the wildest places of the globe in order to obtain subjects with craggy foregrounds and purple distances. Some few of them remain content with polards and flat land; but these are always men of third-rate order; and the leading masters, while they do not reject the beauty of the low grounds, reserve their highest powers to paint Alpine peaks or Italian promontories. And it is eminently noticeable, also, that this pleasure in the mountains is never mingled with fear, or tempered by a spirit of meditation, as with the medieval; but is always free and fearless; brightly exhilarating, and wholly unreflective; so that the painter feels that his mountain foreground may be more consistently animated by a sportsman than a hermit; and our modern society in general goes to the mountains, not to fast, but to feast, and leaves their glaciers covered with chicken-bones and eggshells.

Connected with this want of any sense of solemnity in mountain scenery, is a general profanity of temper in regarding all the rest of nature; that is to say, a total absence of faith in the presence of any deity therein. Whereas the medieval never painted a cloud, but with the purpose of placing an angel in it; and a Greek never entered a wood without expecting to meet a god in it; we should think the appearance of an angel in the cloud wholly unnatural, and should be seriously surprised by meeting a god anywhere. Our chief ideas about the wood are connected with poaching. We have no belief that the clouds

contain more than so many inches of rain or hail, and from our ponds and ditches expect nothing more divine than ducks and water-cresses.

Finally: connected with this profanity of temper is a strong tendency to deny the sacred element of color, and make our boast in blackness. For though occasionally glaring or violent, modern color is on the whole eminently somber, tending continually to gray or brown, and by many of our best painters consistently falsified, with a confessed pride in what they call chaste or subdued tints; so that, whereas a medieval paints his sky bright blue and his foreground bright green, gilds the towers of his castles, and clothes his figures with purple and white, we paint our sky gray, our foreground black, and our foliage brown, and think that enough is sacrificed to the sun in admitting the dangerous brightness of a scarlet cloak or a blue jacket.

These, I believe, are the principal points which would strike us instantly, if we were to be brought suddenly into an exhibition of modern landscapes out of a room filled with medieval work. It is evident that there are both evil and good in this change; but how much evil, or how much good, we can only estimate by considering, as in the former divisions of our inquiry, what are the real roots of the habits of mind which have caused them.

And first, it is evident that the title "Dark Ages," given to the medieval centuries, is, respecting art, wholly inapplicable. They were, on the contrary, the bright ages; ours are the dark ones. I do not mean metaphysically, but literally. They were the ages of gold; ours are the ages of umber.

This is partly mere mistake in us; we build brown brick walls, and wear brown coats, because we have been blunderingly taught to do so, and go on doing so mechanically. There is, however, also some cause for the change in our own tempers. On the whole, these are much sadder ages than the early ones; not sadder in a noble and deep way, but in a dim wearied way,—the way of ennui, and jaded intellect, and uncomfortableness of soul and body. The Middle Ages had their wars and agonies, but also intense delights. Their gold was dashed with blood; but ours is sprinkled with dust. Their life was inwoven with white and purple: ours is one seamless stuff of brown. Not that we are without apparent

<sup>1</sup>Wordsworth, sonnet *Composed upon Westminster Bridge*, 3 September, 1802, l. 12.



festivity, but festivity more or less forced, mistaken, embittered, incomplete—not of the heart. How wonderfully, since Shakespeare's time, have we lost the power of laughing at bad jests! The very finish of our wit belies our gayety.

The profoundest reason of this darkness of heart is, I believe, our want of faith. There never yet was a generation of men (savage or civilized) who, taken as a body, so woefully fulfilled the words "having no hope, and without God in the world,"<sup>1</sup> as the present civilized European race. A Red Indian or Otaheitan<sup>2</sup> savage has more sense of a divine existence round him, or government over him, than the plurality of refined Londoners and Parisians: and those among us who may in some sense be said to believe, are divided almost without exception into two broad classes, Romanist and Puritan; who, but for the interference of the unbelieving portions of society, would, either of them, reduce the other sect as speedily as possible to ashes; the Romanist having always done so whenever he could, from the beginning of their separation, and the Puritan at this time holding himself in complacent expectation of the destruction of Rome by volcanic fire. Such division as this between persons nominally of one religion, that is to say, believing in the same God, and the same Revelation, cannot but become a stumbling-block of the gravest kind to all thoughtful and far-sighted men,—a stumbling-block which they can only surmount under the most favorable circumstances of early education. Hence, nearly all our powerful men in this age of the world are unbelievers; the best of them in doubt and misery; the worst in reckless defiance; the plurality, in plodding hesitation, doing, as well as they can, what practical work lies ready to their hands. Most of our scientific men are in this last class: our popular authors either set themselves definitely against all religious form, pleading for simple truth and benevolence (Thackeray, Dickens), or give themselves up to bitter and fruitless statement of facts (De Balzac), or surface-painting (Scott), or careless blasphemy, sad or smiling (Byron, Béranger). Our earnest poets and deepest thinkers are doubtful and indignant (Tennyson, Carlyle); one or two, anchored,

indeed, but anxious or weeping (Wordsworth, Mrs. Browning); and of these two, the first is not so sure of his anchor, but that now and then it drags with him, even to make him cry out,—

Great God, I had rather be

A Pagan suckled in some creed outworn;

So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.<sup>3</sup>

In politics, religion is now a name; in art, a hypocrisy or affectation. Over German religious pictures the inscription, "See how Pious I am," can be read at a glance by any clear-sighted person. Over French and English religious pictures the inscription, "See how Impious I am," is equally legible. All sincere and modest art is, among us, profane.<sup>4</sup>

This faithlessness operates among us according to our tempers, producing either sadness or levity, and being the ultimate root alike of our discontents and of our wantonnesses. It is marvelous how full of contradiction it makes us: we are first dull, and seek for wild and lonely places because we have no heart for the garden; presently we recover our spirits, and build an assembly-room among the mountains, because we have no reverence for the desert. I do not know if there be game on Sinai, but I am always expecting to hear of some one's shooting over it.<sup>5</sup>

There is, however, another, and a more innocent root of our delight in wild scenery.

All the Renaissance principles of art tended, as I have before often explained, to the setting Beauty above Truth, and seeking for it always at the expense of truth. And the proper punishment of such pursuit—the punishment which all the laws of the universe rendered inevitable—was, that those who thus pursued beauty should wholly lose sight of beauty. All the thinkers of the age, as we saw previously, declared that it did not exist. The age seconded their efforts, and banished beauty, so far as human effort could succeed in doing so, from the face of the earth, and the form of man. To powder the hair, to patch

<sup>1</sup>Sonnet beginning "The world is too much with us; late and soon," ll. 9-12.

<sup>2</sup>Pre-Raphaelitism, of course, excepted, which is a new phase of art, in no wise considered in this chapter. Blake was sincere, but full of wild creeds, and somewhat diseased in brain (Ruskin's note).

<sup>3</sup>Ruskin's expectation was soon fulfilled; see his description of a drawing by J. F. Lewis, *Academy Notes*, 1856

<sup>1</sup>Ephesians, ii, 12.

<sup>2</sup>Otaheite (Tahiti) is the largest of the Society Islands, in the South Pacific.

the cheek, to hoop the body, to buckle the foot, were all part and parcel of the same system which reduced streets to brick walls, and pictures to brown stains. One desert of Ugliness was extended before the eyes of mankind; and their pursuit of the beautiful, so reck- 5 lessly continued, received unexpected consummation in high-heeled shoes and periwigs,—Gower Street, and Gaspar Poussin.

Reaction from this state was inevitable, if 10 any true life was left in the races of mankind; and, accordingly, though still forced, by rule and fashion, to the producing and wearing all that is ugly, men steal out, half-ashamed of themselves for doing so, to the fields and 15 mountains; and, finding among these the color, and liberty, and variety, and power, which are for ever grateful to them, delight in these to an extent never before known; rejoice in all the wildest shattering of the mountain side, as an opposition to Gower Street, gaze in a rapt 20 manner at sunsets and sunrises, to see there the blue, and gold, and purple, which glow for them no longer on knight's armor or temple porch; and gather with care out of the fields, 25 into their blotted herbaria, the flowers which the five orders of architecture have banished from their doors and casements.

The absence of care for personal beauty, which is another great characteristic of the 30 age, adds to this feeling in a twofold way: first, by turning all reverent thoughts away from human nature; and making us think of men as ridiculous or ugly creatures, getting through the world as well as they can, and spoiling it 35 in doing so; not ruling it in a kingly way and crowning all its loveliness. In the Middle Ages hardly anything but vice could be caricatured, because virtue was always visibly and personally noble: now virtue itself is apt to 40 inhabit such poor human bodies, that no aspect of it is invulnerable to jest; and for all fairness we have to seek to the flowers; for all sublimity, to the hills.

The same want of care operates, in another 45 way, by lowering the standard of health, increasing the susceptibility to nervous or sentimental impressions, and thus adding to the other powers of nature over us whatever charm may be felt in her fostering the melan- 50 choly fancies of brooding idleness.

It is not, however, only to existing inanimate nature that our want of beauty in person and dress has driven us. The imagination of

it, as it was seen in our ancestors, haunts us continually; and while we yield to the present fashions, or act in accordance with the dullest modern principles of economy and utility, we look fondly back to the manners of the ages of chivalry, and delight in painting, to the fancy, the fashions we pretend to despise, and the splendors we think it wise to abandon. The furniture and personages of our romance are 10 sought, when the writer desires to please most easily, in the centuries which we profess to have surpassed in everything; the art which takes us into the present times is considered as both daring and degraded; and while the 15 weakest words please us, and are regarded as poetry, which recall the manners of our forefathers, or of strangers, it is only as familiar and vulgar that we accept the description of our own.

In this we are wholly different from all the 20 races that preceded us. All other nations have regarded their ancestors with reverence as saints or heroes; but have nevertheless thought their own deeds and ways of life the 25 fitting subjects for their arts of painting or of verse. We, on the contrary, regard our ancestors as foolish and wicked, but yet find our chief artistic pleasures in descriptions of their ways of life.

The Greeks and medievals honored, but did not imitate their forefathers; we imitate, but do not honor.

With this romantic love of beauty, forced to seek in history, and in external nature, the 35 satisfaction it cannot find in ordinary life, we mingle a more rational passion, the due and just result of newly awakened powers of attention. Whatever may first lead us to the scrutiny of natural objects, that scrutiny never 40 fails of its reward. Unquestionably they are intended to be regarded by us with both reverence and delight; and every hour we give to them renders their beauty more apparent, and their interest more engrossing. Natural 45 science—which can hardly be considered to have existed before modern times—rendering our knowledge fruitful in accumulation, and exquisite in accuracy, has acted for good or evil, according to the temper of the mind 50 which received it; and though it has hardened the faithlessness of the dull and proud, has shown new grounds for reverence to hearts which were thoughtful and humble. The neglect of the art of war, while it has some-

what weakened and deformed the body,<sup>1</sup> has given us leisure and opportunity for studies to which, before, time and space were equally wanting; lives which once were early wasted on the battle-field are now passed usefully in the study; nations which exhausted themselves in annual warfare now dispute with each other the discovery of new planets;<sup>2</sup> and the serene philosopher dissects the plants, and analyzes the dust, of lands which were of old only traversed by the knight in hasty march, or by the borderer in heedless rapine.

The elements of progress and decline being thus strangely mingled in the modern mind, we might beforehand anticipate that one of the notable characters of our art would be its inconsistency; that efforts would be made in every direction, and arrested by every conceivable cause and manner of failure; that in all we did, it would become next to impossible to distinguish accurately the grounds for praise or for regret; that all previous canons of practice and methods of thought would be gradually overthrown, and criticism continually defied by successes which no one had expected, and sentiments which no one could define.

Accordingly, while, in our inquiries into Greek and mediæval art, I was able to describe, in general terms, what all men did or felt, I find now many characters in many men; some, it seems to me, founded on the inferior and evanescent principles of modernism, on its recklessness, impatience, or faithlessness; others founded on its science, its new affection for nature, its love of openness and liberty. And among all these characters, good or evil, I see that some, remaining to us from old or transitional periods, do not properly belong to us, and will soon fade away, and others, though not yet distinctly developed, are yet properly our own, and likely to grow forward into greater strength.

For instance: our reprobation of bright color is, I think, for the most part, mere affectation, and must soon be done away with. Vulgarity,

dullness, or impiety, will indeed always express themselves through art in brown and gray, as in Rembrandt, Caravaggio,<sup>3</sup> and Salvator;<sup>4</sup> but we are not wholly vulgar, dull, or impious; nor, as moderns, are we necessarily obliged to continue so in any wise. Our greatest men, whether sad or gay, still delight, like the great men of all ages, in brilliant hues. The coloring of Scott and Byron is full and pure; that of Keats and Tennyson rich even to excess. Our practical failures in coloring are merely the necessary consequences of our prolonged want of practice during the periods of Renaissance affectation and ignorance; and the only durable difference between old and modern coloring, is the acceptance of certain hues, by the modern, which please him by expressing that melancholy peculiar to his more reflective or sentimental character, and the greater variety of them necessary to express his greater science.

Again: if we ever become wise enough to dress consistently and gracefully, to make health a principal object in education, and to render our streets beautiful with art, the external charm of past history will in great measure disappear. There is no essential reason, because we live after the fatal seventeenth century, that we should never again be able to confess interest in sculpture, or see brightness in embroidery; nor, because now we choose to make the night deadly with our pleasures, and the day with our labors, prolonging the dance till dawn, and the toil to twilight, that we should never again learn how rightly to employ the sacred trusts of strength, beauty, and time. Whatever external charm attaches itself to the past, would then be seen in proper subordination to the brightness of present life; and the elements of romance would exist, in the earlier ages, only in the attraction which must generally belong to whatever is unfamiliar; in the reverence which a noble nation always pays to its ancestors; and in the enchanted light which races, like individuals, must perceive in looking back to the days of their childhood.

Again: the peculiar levity with which natural scenery is regarded by a large number of modern minds cannot be considered as entirely characteristic of the age, inasmuch as it never

<sup>1</sup>Of course this is meant only of the modern citizen or country gentleman, as compared with a citizen of Sparta or old Florence. I leave it to others to say whether the "neglect of the art of war" may or may not, in a yet more fatal sense, be predicated of the English nation. War *without* art, we deem, with God's help, able still to wage nobly (Ruskin's note). The "war *without* art" was the Crimean War.

<sup>2</sup>The allusion is to France and England. In each country several minor planets were discovered independently during the years 1854-1856.

<sup>3</sup>Italian painter (1569-1609).

<sup>4</sup>Salvator Rosa (1615?-1673), Neapolitan painter, musician, and satirical poet.



can belong to its greatest intellects. Men of any high mental power must be serious, whether in ancient or modern days; a certain degree of reverence for fair scenery is found in all our great writers without exception,—even the one who has made us laugh oftenest, taking us to the valley of Chamouni, and to the sea beach, there to give peace after suffering, and change revenge into pity.<sup>1</sup> It is only the dull, the uneducated, or the worldly, whom it is painful to meet on the hillsides; and levity, as a ruling character, cannot be ascribed to the whole nation, but only to its holiday-making apprentices, and its House of Commons.

We need not, therefore, expect to find any single poet or painter representing the entire group of powers, weaknesses, and inconsistent instincts which govern or confuse our modern life. But we may expect that in the man who seems to be given by Providence as the type of the age (as Homer and Dante were given, as the types of classical and medieval mind), we shall find whatever is fruitful and substantial to be completely present, together with those of our weaknesses, which are indeed nationally characteristic, and compatible with general greatness of mind, just as the weak love of fences, and dislike of mountains, were found compatible with Dante's greatness in other respects.

Farther: as the admiration of mankind is found, in our times, to have in great part passed from men to mountains, and from human emotion to natural phenomena, we may anticipate that the great strength of art will also be warped in this direction; with this notable result for us, that whereas the greatest painters or painter of classical and medieval periods, being wholly devoted to the representation of humanity, furnished us with but little to examine in landscape, the greatest painters or painter of modern times will in all probability be devoted to landscape principally; and farther, because in representing human emotion words surpass painting, but in representing natural scenery painting surpasses words, we may anticipate also that the painter and poet (for convenience' sake I here use the words in opposition) will somewhat change their relations of rank in illustrating the mind of the age; that the painter will be-

come of more importance, the poet of less; and that the relations between the men who are the types and first-fruits of the age in word and work,—namely, Scott and Turner,—will be, in many curious respects, different from those between Homer and Phidias, or Dante and Giotto.

## THE STONES OF VENICE

### ST. MARK'S<sup>2</sup>

"AND so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus." If as the shores of Asia lessened upon his sight, the spirit of prophecy had entered into the heart of the weak disciple who had turned back when his hand was on the plough, and who had been judged, by the chiefest of Christ's captains, unworthy thenceforward to go forth with him to the work,<sup>3</sup> how wonderful would he have thought it, that by the lion symbol in future ages he was to be represented among men! how woeful, that the war-cry of his name should so often reanimate the rage of the soldier, on those very plains where he himself had failed in the courage of the Christian, and so often dye with fruitless blood that very Cypriot Sea, over whose waves, in repentance and shame, he was following the Son of Consolation!

That the Venetians possessed themselves of his body in the ninth century, there appears no sufficient reason to doubt, nor that it was principally in consequence of their having done so, that they chose him for their patron saint. There exists, however, a tradition that before he went into Egypt he had founded the church at Aquileia, and was thus in some sort the first bishop of the Venetian isles and people. I believe that this tradition stands on nearly as good grounds as that of St. Peter having been the first bishop of Rome; but, as usual, it is enriched by various later additions and embellishments, much resembling the stories told respecting the church of Murano. Thus we find it recorded by the Santo Padre who compiled the *Vite de' Santi spettanti alle Chiese di Venezia*,<sup>4</sup> that "St. Mark having seen the people of Aquileia well grounded in religion, and being called to Rome by St. Peter, before

<sup>2</sup>Volume II (published in 1853) entitled "The Sea-Stories," from chapter 4.

<sup>3</sup>Acts, xiii, 13; xv, 38, 39 (Ruskin's note).

<sup>4</sup>By the Holy Father who compiled the *Lives of the Patron Saints of the Venetian Churches* (Ruskin gives the reference: Venice, 1761, I, 126).

<sup>1</sup>See *David Copperfield*, chaps. lv and lviii (Ruskin's note).

setting off took with him the holy bishop Hermagoras, and went in a small boat to the marshes of Venice. There were at that period some houses built upon a certain high bank called Rialto, and the boat being driven by the wind was anchored in a marshy place, when St. Mark, snatched into ecstasy, heard the voice of an angel saying to him: 'Peace be to thee, Mark; here shall thy body rest.'" The angel goes on to foretell the building of *una stupenda, ne più veduta Città*;<sup>1</sup> but the fable is hardly ingenious enough to deserve farther relation.

But whether St. Mark was first bishop of Aquileia or not, St. Theodore was the first patron of the city; nor can he yet be considered as having entirely abdicated his early right, as his statue, standing on a crocodile, still companions the winged lion on the opposing pillar of the piazzetta. A church erected to this Saint is said to have occupied, before the ninth century, the site of St. Mark's; and the traveler, dazzled by the brilliancy of the great square, ought not to leave it without endeavoring to imagine its aspect in that early time, when it was a green field, cloister-like and quiet, divided by a small canal, with a line of trees on each side; and extending between the two churches of St. Theodore and St. Geminian, as the little piazza of Torcello lies between its "palazzo" and cathedral.

But in the year 813, when the seat of government was finally removed to the Rialto, a Ducal Palace, built on the spot where the present one stands, with a Ducal Chapel beside it, gave a very different character to the Square of St. Mark; and fifteen years later, the acquisition of the body of the Saint, and its deposition in the Ducal Chapel, perhaps not yet completed, occasioned the investiture of that Chapel with all possible splendor. St. Theodore was deposed from his patronship, and his church destroyed, to make room for the aggrandizement of the one attached to the Ducal Palace, and thenceforward known as "St. Mark's."

This first church was however destroyed by fire, when the Ducal Palace was burned in the revolt against Candiano, in 976. It was partly rebuilt by his successor, Pietro Orseolo, on a larger scale; and, with the assistance of Byzantine architects, the fabric

was carried on under successive Doges for nearly a hundred years; the main building being completed in 1071, but its incrustation with marble not till considerably later. It was consecrated on the 8th of October, 1085, according to Sansovino and the author of the *Chiesa Ducale di S. Marco*,<sup>2</sup> in 1094 according to Lazari, but certainly between 1084 and 1096, those years being the limits of the reign of Vital Falier; I incline to the supposition that it was soon after his accession to the throne in 1085, though Sansovino writes, by mistake, Ordelafo instead of Vital Falier. But, at all events, before the close of the eleventh century the great consecration of the church took place. It was again injured by fire in 1106, but repaired; and from that time to the fall of Venice there was probably no Doge who did not in some slight degree embellish or alter the fabric, so that few parts of it can be pronounced boldly to be of any given date. Two periods of interference are, however, notable above the rest: the first, that in which the Gothic school had superseded the Byzantine towards the close of the fourteenth century, when the pinnacles, upper archivolts, and window traceries were added to the exterior, and the great screen, with various chapels and tabernacle-work, to the interior; the second, when the Renaissance school superseded the Gothic, and the pupils of Titian and Tintoret substituted, over one-half of the church, their own compositions for the Greek mosaics with which it was originally decorated; happily, though with no good-will, having left enough to enable us to imagine and lament what they destroyed. Of this irreparable loss we shall have more to say hereafter; meantime, I wish only to fix in the reader's mind the succession of periods of alterations as firmly and simply as possible.

We have seen that the main body of the church may be broadly stated to be of the eleventh century, the Gothic additions of the fourteenth, and the restored mosaics of the seventeenth. There is no difficulty in distinguishing at a glance the Gothic portions from the Byzantine; but there is considerable difficulty in ascertaining how long, during the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, additions were made to the Byzantine church, which cannot be easily distinguished from the

<sup>1</sup>A wonderful city, never before seen.

<sup>2</sup>Ducal church of St. Mark.

work of the eleventh century, being purposely executed in the same manner. Two of the most important pieces of evidence on this point are, a mosaic in the south transept, and another over the northern door of the façade; the first representing the interior, the second the exterior, of the ancient church.

It has just been stated that the existing building was consecrated by the Doge Vital Falier. A peculiar solemnity was given to that act of consecration, in the minds of the Venetian people, by what appears to have been one of the best arranged and most successful impostures ever attempted by the clergy of the Romish Church. The body of St. Mark had, without doubt, perished in the conflagration of 976; but the revenues of the church depended too much upon the devotion excited by these relics to permit the confession of their loss. The following is the account given by Corner, and believed to this day by the Venetians, of the pretended miracle by which it was concealed.

"After the repairs undertaken by the Doge Orseolo, the place in which the body of the holy Evangelist rested had been altogether forgotten; so that the Doge Vital Falier was entirely ignorant of the place of the venerable deposit. This was no light affliction, not only to the pious Doge, but to all the citizens and people; so that at last, moved by confidence in the Divine mercy, they determined to implore, with prayer and fasting, the manifestation of so great a treasure, which did not now depend upon any human effort. A general fast being therefore proclaimed, and a solemn procession appointed for the 25th day of June, while the people assembled in the church interceded with God in fervent prayers for the desired boon, they beheld, with as much amazement as joy, a slight shaking in the marbles of a pillar (near the place where the altar of the Cross is now), which, presently falling to the earth, exposed to the view of the rejoicing people the chest of bronze in which the body of the Evangelist was laid."

Of the main facts of this tale there is no doubt. They were embellished afterward, as usual, by many fanciful traditions; as, for instance, that, when the sarcophagus was discovered, St. Mark extended his hand out of it, with a gold ring on one of the fingers which he permitted a noble of the Dolfin family to remove; and a quaint and delightful story was

further invented of this ring, which I shall not repeat here, as it is now as well known as any tale of the Arabian Nights.<sup>1</sup> But the fast and the discovery of the coffin, by whatever means effected, are facts; and they are recorded in one of the best-preserved mosaics of the south transept, executed very certainly not long after the event had taken place, closely resembling in its treatment that of the Bayeux tapestry,<sup>2</sup> and showing, in a conventional manner, the interior of the church, as it then was, filled by the people, first in prayer, then in thanksgiving, the pillar standing open before them, and the Doge, in the midst of them, distinguished by his crimson bonnet embroidered with gold, but more unmistakably by the inscription "Dux" over his head, as uniformly is the case in the Bayeux tapestry, and most other pictorial works of the period. The church is, of course, rudely represented, and the two upper stories of it reduced to a small scale in order to form a background to the figures; one of those bold pieces of picture history which we in our pride of perspective, and a thousand things besides, never dare attempt.<sup>3</sup> We should have put in a column or two, of the real or perspective size, and subdued it into a vague background: the old workman crushed the church together that he might get it all in, up to the cupolas; and has, therefore, left us some useful notes of its ancient form, though any one who is familiar with the method of drawing employed at the period will not push the evidence too far. The two pulpits are there, however, as they are at this day, and the fringe of mosaic flower-work which then encompassed the whole church, but which modern restorers have destroyed, all but one fragment still left in the south aisle. There is no attempt to represent the other mosaics on the roof, the scale being too small to admit of their being represented with any success; but some at least of those mosaics had been executed at that period, and their absence in the representation of the entire church is especially to be observed, in

<sup>1</sup>The story tells of the miraculous intervention of St. Mark, with St. George and St. Nicholas, to save Venice from destruction by a great storm in 1340. It is translated in Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*.

<sup>2</sup>A representation of episodes in the conquest of England by William of Normandy, dating probably from early in the twelfth century. It is in the Public Library of Bayeux.

<sup>3</sup>I leave this exceedingly ill-written sentence, trusting the reader will think I write better now (Ruskin's note, added in 1879).



order to show that we must not trust to any negative evidence in such works. M. Lazari has rashly concluded that the central archivolt of St. Mark's *must* be posterior to the year 1205, because it does not appear in the representation of the exterior of the church over the northern door;<sup>1</sup> but he justly observes that this mosaic (which is the other piece of evidence we possess respecting the ancient form of the building) cannot itself be earlier than 1205, since it represents the bronze horses which were brought from Constantinople in that year. And this one fact renders it very difficult to speak with confidence respecting the date of any part of the exterior of St. Mark's; for we have above seen that it was consecrated in the eleventh century, and yet here is one of its most important exterior decorations assuredly retouched, if not entirely added, in the thirteenth, although its style would have led us to suppose it had been an original part of the fabric. However, for all our purposes, it will be enough for the reader to remember that the earliest parts of the building belong to the eleventh, twelfth, and first part of the thirteenth century; the Gothic portions to the fourteenth; some of the altars and embellishments to the fifteenth and sixteenth; and the modern portion of the mosaics to the seventeenth.

This, however, I only wish him to recollect in order that I may speak generally of the Byzantine architecture of St. Mark's, without leading him to suppose the whole church to have been built and decorated by Greek artists. Its later portions, with the single exception of the seventeenth century mosaics, have been so dexterously accommodated to the original fabric that the general effect is still that of a Byzantine building; and I shall not, except when it is absolutely necessary, direct attention to the discordant points, or weary the reader with anatomical criticism. Whatever in St. Mark's arrests the eye, or affects the feelings, is either Byzantine, or has been modified by Byzantine influence; and our inquiry into its architectural merits need not therefore be disturbed by the anxieties of antiquarianism, or arrested by the obscurities of chronology.

And now I wish that the reader, before I bring him into St. Mark's Place, would imag-

ine himself for a little time in a quiet English cathedral town, and walk with me to the west front of its cathedral.<sup>2</sup> Let us go together up the more retired street, at the end of which we can see the pinnacles of one of the towers, and then through the low gray gateway, with its battlemented top and small latticed window in the center, into the inner private-looking road or close, where nothing goes in but the carts of the tradesmen who supply the bishop and the chapter, and where there are little shaven grass-plots, fenced in by neat rails, before old-fashioned groups of somewhat diminutive and excessively trim houses, with little oriel and bay windows jutting out here and there, and deep wooden cornices and eaves painted cream color and white, and small porches to their doors in the shape of cockle-shells, or little, crooked, thick, indescribable wooden gables warped a little on one side; and so forward till we come to larger houses, also old-fashioned, but of red brick, and with garden behind them, and fruit walls, which show here and there, among the nectarines, the vestiges of an old cloister arch or shaft, and looking in front on the cathedral square itself, laid out in rigid divisions of smooth grass and gravel walk, yet not uncheerful, especially on the sunny side, where the canon's children are walking with their nursery maids. And so, taking care not to tread on the grass, we will go along the straight walk to the west front, and there stand for a time, looking up at its deep-pointed porches and the dark places between their pillars where there were statues once, and where the fragments, here and there, of a stately figure are still left, which has in it the likeness of a king, perhaps indeed a king on earth, perhaps a saintly king long ago in heaven; and so higher and higher up to the great moldering wall of rugged sculpture and confused arcades, shattered, and gray, and grisly with heads of dragons and mocking fiends, worn by the rain and swirling winds into yet unseemlier shape, and colored on their stony scales by the deep russet-orange lichen,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Some have identified this English cathedral with Canterbury, others with Salisbury. Ruskin, however, meant this description to be generic.

<sup>3</sup>Alas! all this was described from things now never to be seen more. Read, for "the great moldering wall," and the context of four lines, "the beautiful new parapet by Mr. Scott, with a gross of kings sent down from Kensington" (Ruskin's note, added in 1879). Sir Gilbert Scott restored a number of cathedrals. The restoration of Salisbury was begun in 1862 and 60 new statues were placed on its west front.

<sup>1</sup>In 1879 Ruskin added the note: "He is right, however."

melancholy gold; and so, higher still, to the bleak towers, so far above that the eye loses itself among the bosses of their traceries, though they are rude and strong, and only sees like a drift of eddying black points, now closing, now scattering, and now settling suddenly into invisible places among the bosses and flowers, the crowd of restless birds that fill the whole square with that strange clangor of theirs, so harsh and yet so soothing, like the cries of birds on a solitary coast between the cliffs and sea.

Think for a little while of that scene, and the meaning of all its small formalisms, mixed with its serene sublimity. Estimate its secluded, continuous, drowsy felicities, and its evidence of the sense and steady performance of such kind of duties as can be regulated by the cathedral clock; and weigh the influence of those dark towers on all who have passed through the lonely square at their feet for centuries, and on all who have seen them rising far away over the wooded plain, or catching on their square masses the last rays of the sunset, when the city at their feet was indicated only by the mist at the bend of the river. And then let us quickly recollect that we are in Venice, and land at the extremity of the Calle Lunga San Moisè, which may be considered as there answering to the secluded street that led us to our English cathedral gateway.<sup>1</sup>

We find ourselves in a paved alley, some seven feet wide where it is widest, full of people, and resonant with cries of itinerant salesmen,—a shriek in their beginning, and dying away into a kind of brazen ringing, all the worse for its confinement between the high houses of the passage along which we have to make our way. Over head, an inextricable confusion of rugged shutters, and iron balconies and chimney flues, pushed out on brackets to save room, and arched windows with projecting sills of Istrian stone, and gleams of green leaves here and there where a fig-tree branch escapes over a lower wall from some inner cortile,<sup>2</sup> leading the eye up to the narrow stream of blue sky high over all. On each side, a row of shops, as densely set as may be, occupying, in fact, intervals between the square stone shafts, about eight feet high, which carry the first floors: intervals of which

one is narrow and serves as a door; the other is, in the more respectable shops, wainscoted to the height of the counter and glazed above, but in those of the poorer tradesmen left open to the ground, and the wares laid on benches and tables in the open air, the light in all cases entering at the front only, and fading away in a few feet from the threshold into a gloom which the eye from without cannot penetrate, but which is generally broken by a ray or two from a feeble lamp at the back of the shop, suspended before a print of the Virgin. The less pious shopkeeper sometimes leaves his lamp unlighted, and is contented with a penny print; the more religious one has his print colored and set in a little shrine with a gilded or figured fringe, with perhaps a faded flower or two on each side, and his lamp burning brilliantly. Here, at the fruiterer's, where the dark-green watermelons are heaped upon the counter like cannon balls, the Madonna has a tabernacle of fresh laurel leaves; but the pewterer next door has let his lamp out, and there is nothing to be seen in his shop but the dull gleam of the studded patterns on the copper pans, hanging from his roof in the darkness. Next comes a *Vendita Frittole e Liquori*,<sup>3</sup> where the Virgin, enthroned in a very humble manner beside a tallow candle on a back shelf, presides over certain ambrosial morsels of a nature too ambiguous to be defined or enumerated. But a few steps farther on, at the regular wine-shop of the calle, where we are offered *Vino Nostrani a Soldi* 28.32, the Madonna is in great glory, enthroned above ten or a dozen large red casks of three-year-old vintage, and flanked by goodly ranks of bottles of Maraschino, and two crimson lamps; and for the evening, when the gondoliers will come to drink out, under her auspices, the money they have gained during the day, she will have a whole chandelier.

A yard or two farther, we pass the hostelry of the Black Eagle, and glancing as we pass through the square door of marble, deeply molded, in the outer wall, we see the shadows of its pergola of vines resting on an ancient well, with a pointed shield carved on its side; and so presently emerge on the bridge and Campo San Moisè, whence to the entrance into St. Mark's Place, called the Bocca di Piazza (mouth of the square), the Venetian character

<sup>1</sup>The street has been widened and renamed since this was written.

<sup>2</sup>Courtyard.

<sup>3</sup>Fritter and Liquor Shop.



is nearly destroyed, first by the frightful façade of San Moisè, which we will pause at another time to examine,<sup>1</sup> and then by the modernizing of the shops as they near the piazza, and the mingling with the lower Venetian populace of lounging groups of English and Austrians. We will push fast through them into the shadow of the pillars at the end of the Bocca di Piazza, and then we forget them all; for between those pillars there opens a great light, and, in the midst of it, as we advance slowly, the vast tower of St. Mark seems to lift itself visibly forth from the level field of checkered stones; and, on each side, the countless arches prolong themselves into ranged symmetry, as if the rugged and irregular houses that pressed together above us in the dark alley had been struck back into sudden obedience and lovely order, and all their rude casements and broken walls had been transformed into arches charged with goodly sculpture, and fluted shafts of delicate stone.

And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away;—a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of colored light; a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold, and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory,—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and, in the midst of it, the solemn forms of angels, sceptered, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, “their bluest veins to

kiss”<sup>2</sup>—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archivolt, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels, and the signs of heaven, and the labors of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark’s lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethysts.

Between that grim cathedral of England and this, what an interval! There is a type of it in the very birds that haunt them; for, instead of the restless crowd, hoarse-voiced and sable-winged, drifting on the bleak upper air, the St. Mark’s porches are full of doves, that nestle among the marble foliage, and mingle the soft iridescence of their living plumes, changing at every motion, with the tints, hardly less lovely, that have stood unchanged for seven hundred years.

And what effect has this splendor on those who pass beneath it? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark’s, and you will not see an eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats—not “of them that sell doves”<sup>3</sup> for sacrifice, but of the vendors of toys and caricatures. Round the whole square in front of the church there is almost a continuous line of cafés, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge, and read empty

<sup>1</sup>See vol. III, chap. 3.

<sup>2</sup>*Antony and Cleopatra*, II, v, 20.

<sup>3</sup>St. Matthew, xxi, 12; St. John, ii, 16.



journals; in its center the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes,—the march drowning the miserere, and the sullen crowd thickening round them,—a crowd, which, if it had its will, would stiletto every soldier that pipes to it.<sup>1</sup> And in the recesses of the porches all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards; and unregarded children,—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity, and their throats hoarse with cursing,—gamble, and fight, and snarl, and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised centesimi<sup>2</sup> upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and His angels look down upon it continually.

That we may not enter the church out of the midst of the horror of this, let us turn aside under the portico which looks across the sea, and passing round within the two massive pillars brought from St. Jean d'Acre, we shall find the gate of the Baptistery; let us enter there. The heavy door closes behind us instantly, and the light and the turbulence of the Piazzetta are together shut out by it.

We are in a low vaulted room; vaulted, not with arches but with small cupolas starred with gold, and checkered with gloomy figures: in the center is a bronze font charged with rich bas-reliefs, a small figure of the Baptist standing above it in a single ray of light that glances across the narrow room, dying as it falls from a window high in the wall, and the first thing that it strikes, and the only thing that it strikes brightly, is a tomb. We hardly know if it be a tomb indeed; for it is like a narrow couch set beside the window, low-roofed and curtained, so that it might seem, but that it is some height above the pavement, to have been drawn towards the window, that the sleeper might be wakened early;—only there are two angels, who have drawn the curtain back, and are looking down upon him. Let us look also, and thank that gentle light that rests upon his forehead for ever, and dies away upon his breast.

The face is of a man in middle life, but there are two deep furrows right across the forehead, dividing it like the foundations of a tower: the height of it above is bound by the fillet of the ducal cap. The rest of the features are singu-

larly small and delicate, the lips sharp, perhaps the sharpness of death being added to that of the natural lines; but there is a sweet smile upon them, and a deep serenity upon the whole countenance. The roof of the canopy above has been blue, filled with stars; beneath, in the center of the tomb on which the figure rests, is a seated figure of the Virgin, and the border of it all around is of flowers and soft leaves, growing rich and deep, as if in a field in summer.

It is the Doge Andrea Dandolo, a man early great among the great of Venice; and early lost. She chose him for her king in his 36th year; he died ten years later, leaving behind him that history to which we owe half of what we know of her former fortunes.<sup>3</sup>

Look round at the room in which he lies. The floor of it is of rich mosaic, encompassed by a low seat of red marble, and its walls are of alabaster, but worn and shattered, and darkly stained with age, almost a ruin,—in places the slabs of marble have fallen away altogether, and the rugged brickwork is seen through the rents, but all beautiful; the ravaging fissures fretting their way among the islands and channeled zones of the alabaster, and the time-stains on its translucent masses darkened into fields of rich golden brown, like the color of seaweed when the sun strikes on it through deep sea. The light fades away into the recess of the chamber towards the altar, and the eye can hardly trace the lines of the bas-relief behind it of the baptism of Christ: but on the vaulting of the roof the figures are distinct, and there are seen upon it two great circles, one surrounded by the "Principalities and powers in heavenly places,"<sup>4</sup> of which Milton has expressed the ancient division in the single massy line,

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues,  
Powers,<sup>5</sup>

and around the other, the Apostles; Christ the center of both: and upon the walls, again and again repeated, the gaunt figure of the Baptist, in every circumstance of his life and death; and the streams of the Jordan running down between their cloven rocks; the ax laid to the root of a fruitless tree that springs up on their shore. "Every tree that bringeth

<sup>1</sup>This was written during the Austrian occupation of Venice.

<sup>2</sup>Small coins, normally worth about one-fifth of a cent.

<sup>3</sup>The *Venetian Chronicle of Andrea Dandolo*. He reigned from 1343 to 1354.

<sup>4</sup>See Ephesians, iii, 10.

<sup>5</sup>*Paradise Lost*, V, 601.

not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire."<sup>1</sup> Yes, verily: to be baptized with fire, or to be cast therein; it is the choice set before all men. The march-notes still murmur through the grated window, and mingle with the sounding in our ears of the sentence of judgment, which the old Greek has written on the Baptistry wall. Venice has made her choice.

He who lies under that stony canopy would have taught her another choice, in his day, if she would have listened to him; but he and his counsels have long been forgotten by her, and the dust lies upon his lips.

Through the heavy door whose bronze network closes the place of his rest, let us enter the church itself. It is lost in still deeper twilight, to which the eye must be accustomed for some moments before the form of the building can be traced; and then there opens before us a vast cave, hewn out into the form of a Cross, and divided into shadowy aisles by many pillars. Round the domes of its roof the light enters only through narrow apertures like large stars; and here and there a ray or two from some faraway casement wanders into the darkness, and casts a narrow phosphoric stream upon the waves of marble that heave and fall in a thousand colors along the floor. What else there is of light is from torches, or silver lamps, burning ceaselessly in the recesses of the chapels; the roof sheeted with gold, and the polished walls covered with alabaster, give back at every curve and angle some feeble gleaming to the flames; and the glories round the heads of the sculptured saints flash out upon us as we pass them, and sink again into the gloom. Under foot and over head, a continual succession of crowded imagery, one picture passing into another, as in a dream; forms beautiful and terrible mixed together; dragons and serpents, and ravening beasts of prey, and graceful birds that in the midst of them drink from running fountains and feed from vases of crystal; the passions and the pleasures of human life symbolized together, and the mystery of its redemption; for the mazes of interwoven lines and changeful pictures lead always at last to the Cross, lifted and carved in every place and upon every stone; sometimes with the serpent of eternity wrapped round it, sometimes with doves be-

neath its arms, and sweet herbage growing forth from its feet; but conspicuous most of all on the great rood that crosses the church before the altar, raised in bright blazonry against the shadow of the apse. And although in the recesses of the aisles and chapels, when the mist of the incense hangs heavily, we may see continually a figure traced in faint lines upon their marble, a woman standing with her eyes raised to heaven, and the inscription above her, "Mother of God," she is not here<sup>2</sup> the presiding deity. It is the Cross that is first seen, and always, burning in the center of the temple; and every dome and hollow of its roof has the figure of Christ in the utmost height of it, raised in power, or returning in judgment.

Nor is this interior without effect on the minds of the people. At every hour of the day there are groups collected before the various shrines, and solitary worshipers scattered through the darker places of the church, evidently in prayer both deep and reverent, and, for the most part, profoundly sorrowful. The devotees at the greater number of the renowned shrines of Romanism may be seen murmuring their appointed prayers with wandering eyes and unengaged gestures; but the step of the stranger does not disturb those who kneel on the pavement of St. Mark's; and hardly a moment passes, from early morning to sunset, in which we may not see some half-veiled figure enter beneath the Arabian porch, cast itself into long abasement on the floor of the temple, and then rising slowly with more confirmed step, and with a passionate kiss and clasp of the arms given to the feet of the crucifix, by which the lamps burn always in the northern aisle, leave the church, as if comforted.

But we must not hastily conclude from this that the nobler characters of the building have at present any influence in fostering a devotional spirit. There is distress enough in Venice to bring many to their knees, without excitement from external imagery; and whatever there may be in the temper of the worship offered in St. Mark's more than can be accounted for by reference to the unhappy circumstances of the city, is assuredly not owing either to the beauty of its architecture or to the impressiveness of the Scripture histories

<sup>2</sup>There is an implied reference to the church of San Donato at Murano, described in the preceding chapter, in which the Virgin is "the presiding deity."

<sup>1</sup>St. Matthew, iii, 10.

embodied in its mosaics. That it has a peculiar effect, however slight, on the popular mind, may perhaps be safely conjectured from the number of worshipers which it attracts, while the churches of St. Paul and the Frari, larger in size and more central in position, are left comparatively empty.<sup>1</sup> But this effect is altogether to be ascribed to its richer assemblage of those sources of influence which address themselves to the commonest instincts of the human mind, and which, in all ages and countries, have been more or less employed in the support of superstition. Darkness and mystery; confused recesses of building; artificial light employed in small quantity, but maintained with a constancy which seems to give it a kind of sacredness; preciousness of material easily comprehended by the vulgar

<sup>1</sup>The mere warmth of St. Mark's in winter, which is much greater than that of the other two churches above named, must, however, be taken into consideration, as one of the most efficient causes of its being then more frequented (Ruskin's note).

eye; close air loaded with a sweet and peculiar odor associated only with religious services, solemn music, and tangible idols or images having popular legends attached to them,—these, the stage properties of superstition, which have been from the beginning of the world, and must be to the end of it, employed by all nations, whether openly savage or nominally civilized, to produce a false awe in minds incapable of apprehending the true nature of the Deity, are assembled in St. Mark's to a degree, as far as I know, unexampled in any other European church. The arts of the Magus and the Brahmin are exhausted in the animation of a paralyzed Christianity; and the popular sentiment which these arts excite is to be regarded by us with no more respect than we should have considered ourselves justified in rendering to the devotion of the worshipers at Eleusis, Ellora, or Edfou.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Ellora is in Hyderabad, India; Edfou in upper Egypt.



## ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819-1861)

Clough's father was a cotton merchant in Liverpool when the poet, his second son, was born on 1 January, 1819. In the winter of 1822-1823 the family went to live at Charleston, South Carolina, where they remained—save for two visits in England—until 1836. Meanwhile in 1828 Clough had been sent to a school at Chester, and in the following year had entered Rugby, where he was powerfully influenced by Dr. Arnold. He distinguished himself both as a student and as an athlete, and gave every promise of a brilliant future. In 1837 he entered Balliol College, Oxford (having won the Balliol scholarship at Rugby), and there he inevitably felt the influence of Newman as a call to put his own spiritual house in order. Thoughtful, scrupulous, intensely serious, he gave anxious consideration to the problems of religious belief; with the consequence that doubt began to displace his early faith, and finally caused him to withdraw adherence to Christianity. He did not become hostile to the Church. His secession, if anything, intensified his spiritual convictions and deep moral feeling; while, however, at the same time it isolated him and made the problem of accounting for life as he experienced it an insoluble one. His poetry is full of the inner conflict into which he was thus plunged, and of the persistence of his belief in the spiritual nature and destiny of man, however it was to be based;—and it thus reflects the central aspect and deeper temper of the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, while it also deals with man's central problems and deeper questionings in all ages and times. Serious as he was, however, Clough was not *heavy*, as his poems sufficiently show, and, even more clearly, his letters—and also his intimate friendship with Matthew Arnold.

At Oxford he made self-discipline and true self-development his aims rather than the pursuit of

honors, with the consequence that he disappointed his friends upon obtaining only a second class in 1841. In the following year, however, he secured what was then Oxford's highest distinction—election to a fellowship at Oriel College. In 1843 he became a tutor at Oriel, and was seemingly fixed in a promising academic career. His religious doubts, however, caused him in 1848 to resign his tutorship and fellowship—his integrity thus casting him adrift. He was in Paris with Emerson in May of this year, and in the following two years spent some time in Rome and in Venice, where he wrote *Dipsychus*. In the autumn of 1849 he became the head of University Hall in London, and gained the friendship of Carlyle while he was there, but after two years he gave up the place and resolved to try his fortune in America, whither he sailed in October, 1852, on the same ship with Thackeray and Lowell. He made many friends in the United States, among them Charles Eliot Norton, who later said of him that, when he left Oxford, "he had conquered the world. . . . Whatever might become of him, whatever he might become, his life was a success such as scarcely one man in a generation achieves." He had been in the United States only a few months when friends in England obtained for him a post in the Education Office. He accordingly returned in 1853, and in the following year was married to Blanche Smith. From this time he was fully occupied with official duties—though he found opportunity to aid the work of his relative, Florence Nightingale—and his happy marriage gave him peace of mind. Towards the close of the 1850's, however, his health began to fail, and travel on the continent and in the Near East did not restore his strength. He died at Florence, following a paralytic stroke, on 13 November, 1861.

### "BLANK MISGIVINGS OF A CREATURE MOVING ABOUT IN WORLDS NOT REALIZED" (1841)<sup>1</sup>

V

How often sit I, poring o'er  
My strange distorted youth,

Seeking in vain, in all my store,  
One feeling based on truth;  
Amid the maze of petty life, 5  
A clue whereby to move,  
A spot whereon in toil and strife  
To dare to rest and love.  
So constant as my heart would be,  
So fickle as it must, 10  
'Twere well for others as for me  
'Twere dry as summer dust.  
Excitements come, and act and speech  
Flow freely forth;—but no,  
Nor they, nor aught beside, can reach 15  
The buried world below.

<sup>1</sup>The year is that in which the poem was written, or, when this is not known, that in which it was first published. The above title is quoted from Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*, 144-145. Under it Clough collected a group of nine poems, of which the 5th and the 7th are here printed.

## VII

—ROUSED by importunate knocks  
 I rose, I turned the key, and let them in,  
 First one, anon another, and at length  
 In troops they came; for how could I, who once  
 Had let in one, nor looked him in the face, 5  
 Show scruples e'er again? So in they came,  
 A noisy band of revelers,—vain hopes,  
 Wild fancies, fitful joys; and there they sit  
 In my heart's holy place, and through the  
 night 9  
 Carouse, to leave it when the cold gray dawn  
 Gleams from the East, to tell me that the time  
 For watching and for thought bestowed is  
 gone.

QUA CURSUM VENTUS<sup>1</sup>

(1849)

As SHIPS, becalmed at eve, that lay  
 With canvas drooping, side by side,  
 Two towers of sail<sup>1</sup> at dawn of day  
 Are scarce long leagues apart descried;  
 When fell the night, upsprung the breeze, 5  
 And all the darkling hours they plied,  
 Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas  
 By each was cleaving, side by side:  
 E'en so, but why the tale reveal  
 Of those, whom year by year unchanged, 10  
 Brief absence joined anew to feel,  
 Astounded, soul from soul estranged?  
 At dead of night their sails were filled,  
 And onward each rejoicing steered—  
 Ah, neither blame, for neither willed, 15  
 Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!  
 To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,  
 Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,  
 Through winds and tides one compass guides—  
 To that, and your own selves, be true. 20  
 But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,  
 Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,  
 On your wide plain they join again,  
 Together lead them home at last.  
 One port, methought, alike they sought, 25  
 One purpose hold where'er they fare,—  
 O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!  
 At last, at last, unite them there!

## THE LATEST DECALOGUE

(1849)

THOU shalt have one God only; who  
 Would be at the expense of two?

<sup>1</sup> "Where the wind determines the course."

No graven images may be  
 Worshipped, except the currency:  
 Swear not at all; for, for thy curse 5  
 Thine enemy is none the worse:  
 At church on Sunday to attend  
 Will serve to keep the world thy friend:  
 Honor thy parents: that is, all  
 From whom advancement may befall; 10  
 Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive  
 Officiously to keep alive:  
 Do not adultery commit;  
 Advantage rarely comes of it:  
 Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat, 15  
 When it's so lucrative to cheat:  
 Bear not false witness; let the lie  
 Have time on its own wings to fly:  
 Thou shalt not covet, but tradition  
 Approves all forms of competition. 20

## FROM DIPSYCHUS

(1849)

## I

"THERE is no God," the wicked saith,  
 "And truly it's a blessing,  
 For what He might have done with us  
 It's better only guessing."  
 "There is no God," a youngster thinks, 5  
 "Or really, if there may be,  
 He surely didn't mean a man  
 Always to be a baby."  
 "There is no God, or if there is,"  
 The tradesman thinks, "'twere funny 10  
 If He should take it ill in me  
 To make a little money."  
 "Whether there be," the rich man says,  
 "It matters very little,  
 For I and mine, thank somebody, 15  
 Are not in want of victual."  
 Some others, also, to themselves,  
 Who scarce so much as doubt it,  
 Think there is none, when they are well  
 And do not think about it. 20  
 But country folks who live beneath  
 The shadow of the steeple;  
 The parson and the parson's wife,  
 And mostly married people;  
 Youths green and happy in first love, 25  
 So thankful for illusion;  
 And men caught out in what the world  
 Calls guilt, in first confusion;

And almost every one when age,  
Disease, or sorrows strike him,  
Inclines to think there is a God,  
Or something very like Him.

30

## II

THIS world is very odd we see,  
We do not comprehend it;  
But in one fact we all agree,  
God won't, and we can't mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin  
To take it as I find it;  
The pleasure to take pleasure in;  
The pain, try not to mind it.

5

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,  
May be an unreal mere appearance;  
Only—for my inside, in fine,  
They have a singular coherence.

10

Oh yes, my pensive youth, abstain;  
And any empty sick sensation,  
Remember, anything like pain  
Is only your imagination.

15

Trust me, I've read your German sage  
To far more purpose e'er than you did;  
You find it in his wisest page,  
Whom God deludes is well deluded.

20

## SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

(1849)

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,  
The labor and the wounds are vain,  
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,  
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;  
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,  
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,  
And, but for you, possess the field.

5

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

10

And not by eastern windows only,  
When daylight comes, comes in the light,  
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,  
But westward, look, the land is bright.

15

## HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE!

(1862)

HOPE evermore and believe, O man, for e'en  
as thy thought

So are the things that thou see'st; e'en  
as thy hope and belief.

Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise to  
provoke thee against them;

Hast thou courage? enough, see them exult-  
ing to yield.

Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild  
sea's fuming waters

5

(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou  
think'st to destroy),

All with ineffable longing are waiting their  
invader,

All, with one varying voice, call to him,  
Come and subdue;

Still for their conqueror call, and, but for the  
joy of being conquered

(Rapture they will not forego), dare to re-  
sist and rebel;

10

Still, when resisting and raging, in soft under-  
voice say unto him,

Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore  
and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and  
the stars direct thee,

Go with the girdle of man, go and encom-  
pass the earth.

Not for the gain of the gold; for the getting,  
the hoarding, the having,

15

But for the joy of the deed; but for the  
Duty to do.

Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition  
and action,

With the great girdle of God, go and en-  
compass the earth.

Go; say not in thy heart, And what then were  
it accomplished,

Were the wild impulse allayed, what were  
the use or the good!

20

Go, when the instinct is stilled, and when the  
deed is accomplished,

What thou hast done and shalt do, shall be  
declared to thee then.

Go with the sun and the stars, and yet ever-  
more in thy spirit

Say to thyself: It is good: yet is there better  
than it.

This that I see is not all, and this that I do  
is but little;

25

Nevertheless it is good, though there is  
better than it.



QUI LABORAT, ORAT<sup>1</sup>

(1862)

O ONLY Source of all our light and life,  
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see  
and feel,  
But whom the hours of mortal moral strife  
Alone aright reveal!

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought, 5  
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine;  
Chastised each rebel self-centered thought,  
My will adoreth Thine.

With eye down-dropped, if then this earthly  
mind 9  
Speechless remain, or speechless e'en depart;  
Nor seek to see—for what of earthly-kind  
Can see Thee as Thou art?—

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold  
In thought's abstractest forms to seem to  
see,  
It dare not dare the dread communion hold 15  
In ways unworthy Thee.

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed forgive,  
In worldly walks the prayerless heart pre-  
pare;  
And if in work its life it seem to live, 20  
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the work it  
plies,  
Unsummoned powers the blinding film shall  
part,  
And scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes  
In recognition start.

But, as thou willest, give or e'en forbear 25  
The beatific supersensual sight,  
So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler  
prayer  
Approach Thee morn and night.

AH! YET CONSIDER  
IT AGAIN!

(1851)

"OLD things need not be therefore true,"  
O brother men, nor yet the new;  
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,  
And yet consider it again!

The souls of now two thousand years 5  
Have laid up here their toils and fears,  
And all the earnings of their pain,—  
Ah, yet consider it again!

<sup>1</sup>"Who works, prays."

We! what do we see? each a space  
Of some few yards before his face; 10  
Does that the whole wide plan explain?  
Ah, yet consider it again!

Alas! the great world goes its way,  
And takes its truth from each new day;  
They do not quit, nor can retain, 15  
Far less consider it again.

"WITH WHOM IS NO  
VARIABLENESS, NEITHER  
SHADOW OF TURNING" 2

(1862)

IT FORTIFIES my soul to know  
That, though I perish, Truth is so:  
That, howso'er I stray and range,  
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change. 5  
I steadier step when I recall  
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall.

PERCHÈ PENSA?  
PENSANDO S'INVECCHIA<sup>3</sup>

(1869)

TO SPEND uncounted years of pain,  
Again, again, and yet again,  
In working out in heart and brain  
The problem of our being here;  
To gather facts from far and near, 5  
Upon the mind to hold them clear,  
And, knowing more may yet appear,  
Unto one's latest breath to fear,  
The premature result to draw—  
Is this the object, end and law, 10  
And purpose of our being here?

## LIFE IS STRUGGLE

(1869)

TO WEAR out heart, and nerves, and brain,  
And give oneself a world of pain;  
Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,  
Imperious, supple—God knows what, 5  
For what's all one to have or not;  
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!  
For 'tis not joy, it is not gain,  
It is not in itself a bliss,  
Only it is precisely this  
That keeps us all alive. 10

To say we truly feel the pain,  
And quite are sinking with the strain;—

<sup>2</sup>James, i, 17.<sup>3</sup>"Why does he think? Through thinking one becomes old."

Entirely, simply, undeceived,  
 Believe, and say we ne'er believed  
 The object, e'en were it achieved, 15  
 A thing we e'er had cared to keep;  
 With heart and soul to hold it cheap,  
 And then to go and try it again;  
 O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!  
 O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss, 20  
 Only it is precisely this  
 That keeps us still alive.

## IN A LONDON SQUARE

(1869)

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,  
 East wind and frost are safely gone;  
 With zephyr mild and balmy rain  
 The summer comes serenely on;  
 Earth, air, and sun and skies combine 5  
 To promise all that's kind and fair:—  
 But thou, O human heart of mine,  
 Be still, contain thyself, and bear.  
 December days were brief and chill,  
 The winds of March were wild and drear, 10

And, nearing and receding still,  
 Spring never would, we thought, be here.  
 The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,  
 Had, not the less, their certain date:—  
 And thou, O human heart of mine, 15  
 Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.

## ALL IS WELL

(1869)

WHATE'ER you dream, with doubt possessed,  
 Keep, keep it snug within your breast,  
 And lay you down and take your rest;  
 Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,  
 And when you wake, to work again. 5  
 The wind it blows, the vessel goes,  
 And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well: no need of care;  
 Though how it will, and when, and where,  
 We cannot see, and can't declare. 10  
 In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,  
 'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,  
 The wind it blows, the ship it goes,  
 Though where and whither, no one knows.

## MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822-1888)

Arnold was born at Laleham, in Middlesex, on 24 December, 1822. His father, Thomas Arnold, later became famous as the head-master of Rugby School, and the son, widely as his thought came to diverge from his father's, never ceased to feel the influence of the simple and powerful personality who, by his work at Rugby, transformed English public-school life. Arnold was sent first to his father's school, the Wykehamist College of Winchester, but after a year there was brought to Rugby, where he remained four years, until, in 1841, he went up to Balliol College, Oxford, with a classical scholarship. He took his B. A. in 1845. He failed to secure a first class, but nevertheless was soon elected a Fellow of Oriel College. This opened up to him the possibility of an academic career but, deeply as Arnold loved Oxford throughout his life, he seems never seriously to have considered remaining there; and one feels that he was right if he thought that his nature demanded the contacts of a larger world and could ill brook the small restraints of academic life. In 1847 he became a private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, who was then President of the Privy Council. Four years later he was appointed an inspector of schools. He took this post, as he many years later told an audience of teachers, not because he liked the work or indeed at first knew anything about it, but in order to be able to marry. And shortly thereafter he was married to Miss Frances Lucy Wightman, who made a home for him which during the remainder of his life was his chief resource and stay. Arnold never grew to like—as who could have grown to like?—the incessant drudgery of his educational post, but he soon came to see the importance of his work and to value his position for the influence it gave him in improving education. His post also gave Arnold various opportunities for travel on the Continent, and enabled him to publish some of the best and wisest writing on education that the nineteenth century saw. He remained an inspector of schools until within a few years of his death on 15 April, 1888.

It is a severe loss to literature that Arnold was thus compelled to earn his living; for the greater part of his literary work had to be done in time stolen, so to say, from his official duties. That he accomplished as much as he did in untoward circumstances fairly indicates that he would have been able to do much more had he ever been given the opportunity. He began his literary career as a poet, publishing *The Strayed Reveler and Other*

*Poems* anonymously in 1849. Three years later he published, also anonymously, *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems*. Both volumes were soon withdrawn from sale because of Arnold's dissatisfaction with some of the poems they contained. In 1853 and 1855, however, the greater number of the earlier poems were re-issued, together with some new ones, among the latter *Sohrab and Rustum* and *The Scholar Gypsy*. *Merope*, a dramatic poem, was published in 1858, and *New Poems* in 1867. Meanwhile Arnold had been elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1857, a post which he held, as was then possible, for two terms, until 1867. The duties of this position turned his attention definitely to criticism, and from the early eighteen-sixties his work was almost exclusively critical, as he wrote little or no poetry after 1867. His lectures *On Translating Homer* were published in 1861, *Essays in Criticism* in 1865, and *Celtic Literature* in 1867. In a famous and often disputed phrase Arnold defined poetry as a "criticism of life." It is a phrase which, at any rate, may stand for the poetry which Arnold valued most highly, and it may stand, too, for Arnold's own critical work. Like Ruskin, Arnold was unable to consider artistic excellence as a thing separable from the common life of men, and like Ruskin he was inevitably drawn on from the consideration of art to consideration of the social and moral problems raised by industrial democracies. His major contributions to the discussion of these questions are contained in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), *St. Paul and Protestantism* (1870), *Friendship's Garland* (1871), *Literature and Dogma* (1873), *God and the Bible* (1875), *Mixed Essays* (1879), and *Irish Essays* (1882). The *Discourses in America* (1885) were delivered in a lecture-tour of the United States in the winter of 1883-1884.

In a letter to his mother written in 1869 Arnold says: "My poems represent, on the whole, the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century, and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is, and interested in the literary productions which reflect it. It might be fairly urged that I have less poetical sentiment than Tennyson, and less intellectual vigor and abundance than Browning; yet, because I have perhaps more of a fusion of the two than either of them, and have more regularly applied that fusion to the main line of modern development, I am likely enough to have my turn, as they have had theirs." The passage of years has



served to show that Arnold's verdict on his own poetry was essentially just. His verse has never been widely popular, but it securely holds, and will long hold, the attention of thoughtful people. Likewise his criticism, whether one can agree

with all his conclusions or not, will long be read for its persuasive charm, its ease and urbanity, its combined lightness and sureness of touch, and its honest good faith always showing beneath the surface of Arnold's playfulness.

## THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM AT THE PRESENT TIME<sup>1</sup>

MANY objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth; a proposition about criticism, and its importance at the present day. I said: "Of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort; the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is."<sup>2</sup> I added, that owing to the operation in English literature of certain causes, "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires,—criticism"; and that the power and value of English literature was thereby impaired. More than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort. And the other day, having been led by an excellent notice of Wordsworth<sup>3</sup> published in the *North British Review*, to turn again to his biography, I found in the words of this great man, whom I, for one, must always listen to with the profoundest respect, a sentence passed on the critic's business, which seems to justify every possible

disparagement of it. Wordsworth says in one of his letters:

The writers in these publications [the Reviews], while they prosecute their inglorious employment, can not be supposed to be in a state of mind very favorable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine poetry.

And a trustworthy reporter of his conversation quotes a more elaborate judgment to the same effect:

Wordsworth holds the critical power very low, infinitely lower than the inventive; and he said to-day that if the quantity of time consumed in writing critiques on the works of others were given to original composition, of whatever kind it might be, it would be much better employed; it would make a man find out sooner his own level, and it would do infinitely less mischief. A false or malicious criticism may do much injury to the minds of others; a stupid invention, either in prose or verse, is quite harmless.

It is almost too much to expect of poor human nature, that a man capable of producing some effect in one line of literature, should, for the greater good of society, voluntarily doom himself to impotence and obscurity in another. Still less is this to be expected from men addicted to the composition of the "false or malicious criticism," of which Wordsworth speaks. However, everybody would admit that a false or malicious criticism had better never have been written. Everybody, too, would be willing to admit, as a general proposition, that the critical faculty is lower than the inventive. But is it true that criticism is really, in itself, a baneful and injurious employment; is it true that all time given to writing critiques on the works of others would be much better employed if it were given to original composition, of whatever kind this may be? Is it true that Johnson had better have gone on producing more *Irenes*<sup>4</sup> instead of writing his *Lives of the Poets*; nay, is it certain that Wordsworth himself was better em-

<sup>1</sup>The initial essay in *Essays in Criticism*, 1865. It had previously been published in the *National Review*, November, 1864. The essays and poems by Arnold in this volume are reprinted with the permission of the Macmillan Company.

<sup>2</sup>This and the following quotation are from the conclusion of the second lecture in Arnold's *On Translating Homer*.

<sup>3</sup>I cannot help thinking that a practice, common in England during the last century, and still followed in France, of printing a notice of this kind,—a notice by a competent critic,—to serve as an introduction to an eminent author's works, might be revived among us with advantage. To introduce all succeeding editions of Wordsworth, Mr. Shairp's notice (it is permitted, I hope, to mention his name) might, it seems to me, excellently serve; it is written from the point of view of an admirer, nay, of a disciple, and that is right; but then the disciple must be also, as in this case he is, a critic, a man of letters, not, as too often happens, some relation or friend with no qualification for his task except affection for his author (Arnold's note). John Campbell Shairp was Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1877 to 1887.

<sup>4</sup>*Irene*, Dr. Johnson's only play, is a classical tragedy. It ran for nine nights at Drury Lane Theater in 1749.

ployed in making his Ecclesiastical Sonnets, than when he made his celebrated Preface,<sup>1</sup> so full of criticism, and criticism of the works of others? Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism. Without wasting time over the exaggeration which Wordsworth's judgment on criticism clearly contains, or over an attempt to trace the causes,—not difficult I think to be traced,—which may have led Wordsworth to this exaggeration, a critic may with advantage seize an occasion for trying his own conscience, and for asking himself of what real service, at any given moment, the practice of criticism either is, or may be made, to his own mind and spirit, and to the minds and spirits of others.

The critical power is of lower rank than the creative. True; but in assenting to this proposition, one or two things are to be kept in mind. It is undeniable that the exercise of a creative power, that a free creative activity, is the true function of man; it is proved to be so by man's finding in it his true happiness. But it is undeniable, also, that men may have the sense of exercising this free creative activity in other ways than in producing great works of literature or art; if it were not so, all but a very few men would be shut out from the true happiness of all men; they may have it in well-doing, they may have it in learning,\* they may have it even in criticizing. This is one thing to be kept in mind. Another is, that the exercise of the creative power in the production of great works of literature or art, however high this exercise of it may rank, is not at all epochs and under all conditions possible; and that therefore labor may be vainly spent in attempting it, which might with more fruit be used in preparing for it, in rendering it possible. This creative power works with elements, with materials; what it has not those materials, those elements, ready for its use? In that case it must surely wait till they are ready. Now in literature,—I will limit myself to literature, for it is about literature that the question arises,—the elements with which the creative power works are ideas; the best ideas, on every matter which

literature touches, current at the time; at any rate we may lay it down as certain that in modern literature no manifestation of the creative power not working with these can be very important or fruitful. And I say *current* at the time, not merely accessible at the time; for creative literary genius does not principally show itself in discovering new ideas; that is rather the business of the philosopher: the grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations,—making beautiful works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is why great creative epochs in literature are so rare; this is why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the productions of many men of real genius; because for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control.

Nay, they are more within the control of the critical power. It is the business of the critical power, as I said in the words already quoted, "in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." Thus it tends, at last, to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself. It tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society, the touch of truth is the touch of life, and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature.

Or, to narrow our range, and quit these considerations of the general march of genius and of society, considerations which are apt to become too abstract and impalpable,—every one can see that a poet, for instance, ought to know life and the world before deal-

<sup>1</sup>The Preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*.



ing with them in poetry; and life and the world being, in modern times, very complex things, the creation of a modern poet, to be worth much, implies a great critical effort behind it; else it must be a comparatively 5 poor, barren, and short-lived affair. This is why Byron's poetry had so little endurance in it, and Goethe's so much; both Byron and Goethe had a great productive power, but Goethe's was nourished by a great critical 10 effort providing the true materials for it, and Byron's was not; Goethe knew life and the world, the poet's necessary subjects, much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron. He knew a great deal more of them, 15 and he knew them much more as they really are.

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of this century, had about it, in 20 fact, something premature; and that from this cause its productions are doomed, most of them, in spite of the sanguine hopes which accompanied and do still accompany them, to prove hardly more lasting than the produc- 25 tions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematurity comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first 30 quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and 35 variety. Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, 40 to suppose that he could have been different; but surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is,—his thought richer, and his influence of wider application,—was that he should have read 45 more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading him.

But to speak of books and reading may easily lead to a misunderstanding here. It 50 was not really books and reading that lacked to our poetry, at this epoch; Shelley had plenty of reading, Coleridge had immense reading. Pindar and Sophocles—as we all

say so glibly, and often with so little discernment of the real import of what we are saying—had not many books; Shakespeare was no deep reader. True; but in the Greece of Pin- 5 dar and Sophocles, in the England of Shakespeare, the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power; society was, in the fullest measure, permeated by fresh thought, 10 intelligent and alive; and this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise,—in this it finds its data, its materials, truly ready for its hand; all the books and reading in the world are only valuable as they 15 are helps to this. Even when this does not actually exist, books and reading may enable a man to construct a kind of semblance of it in his own mind, a world of knowledge and intelligence in which he may live and work: 20 this is by no means an equivalent, to the artist, for the nationally diffused life and thought of the epochs of Sophocles or Shakespeare, but, besides that it may be a means of preparation for such epochs, it does really constitute, 25 if many share in it, a quickening and sustaining atmosphere of great value. Such an atmosphere the many-sided learning and the long and widely-combined critical effort of Germany formed for Goethe, when he lived 30 and worked. There was no national glow of life and thought there, as in the Athens of Pericles, or the England of Elizabeth. That was the poet's weakness. But there was a sort of equivalent for it in the complete culture 35 and unfettered thinking of a large body of Germans. That was his strength. In the England of the first quarter of this century, there was neither a national glow of life and thought, such as we had in the age of Eliza- 40 beth, nor yet a culture and a force of learning and criticism, such as were to be found in Germany. Therefore the creative power of poetry wanted, for success in the highest sense, materials and a basis; a thorough inter- 45 pretation of the world was necessarily denied to it.

At first sight it seems strange that out of the immense stir of the French Revolution and its age should not have come a crop of works 50 of genius equal to that which came out of the stir of the great productive time of Greece, or out of that of the Renaissance, with its powerful episode the Reformation. But the truth is that the stir of the French Revolution took



a character which essentially distinguished it from such movements as these. These were, in the main, disinterestedly intellectual and spiritual movements; movements in which the human spirit looked for its satisfaction in itself and in the increased play of its own activity: the French Revolution took a political, practical character. The movement which went on in France under the old *régime*, from 1700 to 1789, was far more really akin than that of the Revolution itself to the movement of the Renaissance; the France of Voltaire and Rousseau told far more powerfully upon the mind of Europe than the France of the Revolution. Goethe reproached this last expressly with having "thrown quiet culture back." Nay, and the true key to how much in our Byron, even in our Wordsworth, is this!—that they had their source in a great movement of feeling, not in a great movement of mind. The French Revolution, however,—that object of so much blind love and so much blind hatred,—found undoubtedly its motive-power in the intelligence of men and not in their practical sense;—this is what distinguishes it from the English Revolution of Charles the First's time; this is what makes it a more spiritual event than our Revolution, an event of much more powerful and world-wide interest, though practically less successful;—it appeals to an order of ideas which are universal, certain, permanent. 1789 asked of a thing, Is it rational? 1642 asked of a thing, Is it legal? or, when it went furthest, Is it according to conscience? This is the English fashion; a fashion to be treated, within its own sphere, with the highest respect; for its success, within its own sphere, has been prodigious. But what is law in one place, is not law in another; what is law here to-day, is not law even here to-morrow; and as for conscience, what is binding on one man's conscience is not binding on another's; the old woman who threw her stool at the head of the surpliced minister in St. Giles's Church at Edinburgh obeyed an impulse to which millions of the human race may be permitted to remain strangers. But the prescriptions of reason are absolute, unchanging, of universal validity; to count by tens is the easiest way of counting,—that is a proposition of which every one, from here to the Antipodes, feels the force; at least, I should say so, if we did not live in a country where it is not impossible that any morning we may find a letter in the *Times* declaring that a decimal coinage is an absurdity. That a whole nation should have been penetrated with an enthusiasm for pure reason, and with an ardent zeal for making its prescriptions triumph, is a very remarkable thing, when we consider how little of mind, or anything so worthy and quickening as mind, comes into the motives which alone, in general, impel great masses of men. In spite of the extravagant direction given to this enthusiasm, in spite of the crimes and follies in which it lost itself, the French Revolution derives from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas, a unique and still living power; it is—it will probably long remain—the greatest, the most animating event in history. And, as no sincere passion for the things of the mind, even though it turn out in many respects an unfortunate passion, is ever quite thrown away and quite barren of good, France has reaped from hers one fruit, the natural and legitimate fruit, though not precisely the grand fruit she expected; she is the country in Europe where *the people* is most alive.

But the mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these fine ideas of the reason was fatal. Here an Englishman is in his element: on this theme we can all go on for hours. And all we are in the habit of saying on it has undoubtedly a great deal of truth. Ideas cannot be too much prized in and for themselves, cannot be too much lived with; but to transport them abruptly into the world of politics and practice, violently to revolutionize this world to their bidding,—that is quite another thing. There is the world of ideas and there is the world of practice; the French are often for suppressing the one and the English the other; but neither is to be suppressed. A member of the House of Commons said to me the other day: "That a thing is an anomaly, I consider to be no objection to it whatever." I venture to think he was wrong; that a thing is an anomaly *is* an objection to it, but absolutely and in the sphere of ideas: it is not necessarily, under such and such circumstances, or at

<sup>1</sup>The story to which Arnold alludes is apocryphal, but had its origin in riotous actions which took place in the church on Sunday, 23 July, 1637, when Archbishop Laud's Liturgy was introduced there.

such and such a moment, an objection to it in the sphere of politics and practice. Joubert<sup>1</sup> has said beautifully: *C'est la force et le droit qui règlent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit.* (Force and right are the governors of this world; force till right is ready.) *Force till right is ready*; and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral, and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right,—right, so far as we are concerned, *is not ready*,—until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it. The way in which for us it may change and transform force, the existing order of things, and become, in its turn, the legitimate ruler of the world, will depend on the way in which, when our time comes, we see it and will it. Therefore for other people enamored of their own newly discerned right, to attempt to impose it upon us as ours, and violently to substitute their right for our force, is an act of tyranny, and to be resisted. It sets at nought the second great half of our maxim, *force till right is ready*. This was the grand error of the French Revolution; and its movement of ideas, by quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere, ran, indeed, a prodigious and memorable course, but produced no such intellectual fruit as the movement of ideas of the Renaissance, and created, in opposition to itself, what I may call an *epoch of concentration*. The great force of that epoch of concentration was England; and the great voice of that epoch of concentration was Burke. It is the fashion to treat Burke's writings on the French Revolution as superannuated and conquered by the event; as the eloquent but unphilosophical tirades of bigotry and prejudice. I will not deny that they are often disfigured by the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded, and his observation therefore at fault; but on the whole, and for those who can make the needful corrections, what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth; they contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration, dissipate the heavy atmosphere which its own nature is apt to

engender round it, and make its resistance rational instead of mechanical.

But Burke is so great because, almost alone in England, he brings thought to bear upon politics, he saturates politics with thought; it is his accident that his ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not of an epoch of expansion; it is his characteristic that he so lived by ideas, and had such a source of them welling up within him, that he could float even an epoch of concentration and English Tory politics with them. It does not hurt him that Dr. Price<sup>2</sup> and the Liberals were enraged with him; it does not even hurt him that George the Third and the Tories were enchanted with him. His greatness is that he lived in a world which neither English Liberalism nor English Toryism is apt to enter;—the world of ideas, not the world of catchwords and party habits. So far is it from being really true of him that he “to party gave up what was meant for mankind,”<sup>3</sup> that at the very end of his fierce struggle with the French Revolution, after all his invectives against its false pretensions, hollowness, and madness, with his sincere conviction of its mischievousness, he can close a memorandum on the best means of combating it, some of the last pages he ever wrote,<sup>4</sup>—the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in December, 1791,—with these striking words:

The evil is stated, in my opinion, as it exists. The remedy must be where power, wisdom, and information, I hope, are more united with good intentions than they can be with me. I have done with this subject, I believe, forever. It has given me many anxious moments for the last two years. *If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men. They will not be resolute and firm, but perverse and obstinate.*

That return of Burke upon himself has always seemed to me one of the finest things in English literature, or indeed in any literature.

<sup>1</sup>Richard Price (1723–1791), a Unitarian minister, a moralist, and an advocate of civil and religious liberty.

<sup>2</sup>From Goldsmith's *Retaliation*, l. 32.

<sup>3</sup>Arnold is here in error. Burke wrote his *Letter to a Noble Lord* and his *Letters on a Regicidal Peace* in 1796 (he died in 1797).

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Joubert (1754–1824), French moralist and man of letters. The seventh essay in Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* is devoted to him.



That is what I call living by ideas; when one side of a question has long had your earnest support, when all your feelings are engaged, when you hear all round you no language but one, when your party talks this language like a steam-engine and can imagine no other,—still to be able to think, still to be irresistibly carried, if so it be, by the current of thought to the opposite side of the question, and, like Balaam,<sup>1</sup> to be unable to speak anything *but what the Lord has put in your mouth*. I know nothing more striking, and I must add that I know nothing more un-English.

For the Englishman in general is like my friend the Member of Parliament, and believes, point-blank, that for a thing to be an anomaly is absolutely no objection to it whatever. He is like the Lord Auckland<sup>2</sup> of Burke's day, who, in a memorandum on the French Revolution, talks of "certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, who have presumed themselves capable of establishing a new system of society." The Englishman has been called a political animal, and he values what is political and practical so much that ideas easily become objects of dislike in his eyes, and thinkers "miscreants," because ideas and thinkers have rashly meddled with politics and practice. This would be all very well if the dislike and neglect confined themselves to ideas transported out of their own sphere, and meddling rashly with practice; but they are inevitably extended to ideas as such, and to the whole life of intelligence; practice is everything, a free play of the mind is nothing. The notion of the free play of the mind upon all subjects being a pleasure in itself, being an object of desire, being an essential provider of elements without which a nation's spirit, whatever compensations it may have for them, must, in the long run, die of inanition, hardly enters into an Englishman's thoughts. It is noticeable that the word *curiosity*, which in other languages is used in a good sense, to mean, as a high and fine quality of man's nature, just this disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake,—it is noticeable, I say, that this word has in our language no sense of the kind, no sense but a rather bad and disparaging one. But criticism, real criticism, is essentially the exercise of this very

quality; it obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind; and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever. This is an instinct for which there is, I think, little original sympathy in the practical English nature, and what there was of it has undergone a long benumbing period of blight and suppression in the epoch of concentration which followed the French Revolution.

But epochs of concentration cannot well endure for ever; epochs of expansion, in the due course of things, follow them. Such an epoch of expansion seems to be opening in this country. In the first place all danger of a hostile forcible pressure of foreign ideas upon our practice has long disappeared; like the traveler in the fable,<sup>3</sup> therefore, we begin to wear our cloak a little more loosely. Then, with a long peace, the ideas of Europe steal gradually and amicably in, and mingle, though in infinitesimally small quantities at a time, with our own notions. Then, too, in spite of all that is said about the absorbing and brutalizing influence of our passionate material progress, it seems to me indisputable that this progress is likely, though not certain, to lead in the end to an apparition of intellectual life; and that man, after he has made himself perfectly comfortable and has now to determine what to do with himself next, may begin to remember that he has a mind, and that the mind may be made the source of great pleasure. I grant it is mainly the privilege of faith, at present, to discern this end to our railways, our business, and our fortune-making; but we shall see if, here as elsewhere, faith is not in the end the true prophet. Our ease, our traveling, and our unbounded liberty to hold just as hard and securely as we please to the practice to which our notions have given birth, all tend to beget an inclination to deal a little more freely with these notions themselves, to canvass them a little, to penetrate a little into their real nature. Flutterings of curiosity, in the foreign sense of the word, appear amongst us, and it is in these that criticism must look to find its account. Criticism first; a time of

<sup>1</sup>See Numbers, xxii, 38.

<sup>2</sup>William Eden (1744–1814), raised to the peerage in 1789.

<sup>3</sup>Of Æsop. The fable tells of a contest between the North Wind and the Sun as to which would first strip a man of his clothes.



true creative activity, perhaps,—which, as I have said, must inevitably be preceded amongst us by a time of criticism,—hereafter, when criticism has done its work.

It is of the last importance that English criticism should clearly discern what rule for its course, in order to avail itself of the field now opening to it, and to produce fruit for the future, it ought to take. The rule may be summed up in one word,—*disinterestedness*. And how is criticism to show *disinterestedness*? By keeping aloof from practice; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches; by steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them. Else criticism, besides being really false to its own nature, merely continues in the old rut which it has hitherto followed in this country, and will certainly miss the chance now given to it. For what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it; it subserves interests not its own; our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of mind the second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted. An organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, having for its main function to understand and utter the best that is known and thought in the world, existing, it may be said, as just an organ for a free play of the mind, we have not; but we have the *Edinburgh Review*, existing as an organ of the old Whigs, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Quar-*

*terly Review*, existing as an organ of the Tories, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *British Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the political Dissenters, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Times*, existing as an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that. And so on through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society; every fraction has, as such, its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free disinterested play of mind meets with no favor. Directly this play of mind wants to have more scope, and to forget the pressure of practical considerations a little, it is checked, it is made to feel the chain; we saw this the other day in the extinction, so much to be regretted, of the *Home and Foreign Review*; perhaps in no organ of criticism in this country was there so much knowledge, so much play of mind; but these could not save it: the *Dublin Review* subordinates play of mind to the practical business of English and Irish Catholicism, and lives. It must needs be that men should act in sects and parties, that each of these sects and parties should have its organ, and should make this organ subserve the interests of its action; but it would be well, too, that there should be a criticism, not the minister of these interests, not their enemy, but absolutely and entirely independent of them. No other criticism will ever attain any real authority or make any real way towards its end,—the creating a current of true and fresh ideas.

It is because criticism has so little kept in the pure intellectual sphere, has so little detached itself from practice, has been so directly polemical and controversial, that it has so ill accomplished, in this country, its best spiritual work; which is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarizing, to lead him towards perfection, by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things. A polemical practical criticism makes men blind even to the ideal imperfection of their practice, makes them willingly assert its ideal perfection, in order the better to secure it against attack; and clearly this is narrowing and baneful for them. If they were reassured on the practical side, speculative considera-

tions of ideal perfection they might be brought to entertain, and their spiritual horizon would thus gradually widen. Mr. Adderley<sup>1</sup> says to the Warwickshire farmers:

Talk of the improvement of breed! Why, the race we ourselves represent, the men and women, the old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world. . . . The absence of a too enervating climate, too unclouded skies, and a too luxurious nature, has produced so vigorous a race of people, and has rendered us so superior to all the world.

Mr. Roebuck<sup>2</sup> says to the Sheffield cutlers:

I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivaled happiness may last.

Now obviously there is a peril for poor human nature in words and thoughts of such exuberant self-satisfaction, until we find ourselves safe in the streets of the Celestial City.

*Das wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blicke  
Der vorwärts sieht, wie viel noch übrig bleibt*—

says Goethe; the little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do. Clearly this is a better line of reflection for weak humanity, so long as it remains on this earthly field of labor and trial. But neither Mr. Adderley nor Mr. Roebuck is by nature inaccessible to considerations of this sort. They only lose sight of them owing to the controversial life we all lead, and the practical form which all speculation takes with us. They have in view opponents whose aim is not ideal, but practical; and in their zeal to uphold their own practice against these innovators, they go so far as even to attribute to this practice an ideal perfection. Somebody has been wanting to introduce a six-pound franchise,<sup>4</sup> or to abolish church-rates,<sup>5</sup> or to collect agricultural sta-

tistics by force, or to diminish local self-government. How natural, in reply to such proposals, very likely improper or ill-timed, to go a little beyond the mark, and to say stoutly, "Such a race of people as we stand, so superior to all the world! The old Anglo-Saxon race, the best breed in the whole world! I pray that our unrivaled happiness may last! I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it!" And so long as criticism answers this dithyramb by insisting that the old Anglo-Saxon race would be still more superior to all others if it had no church-rates, or that our unrivaled happiness would last yet longer with a six-pound franchise, so long will the strain, "The best breed in the whole world!" swell louder and louder, everything ideal and refining will be lost out of sight, and both the assailed and their critics will remain in a sphere, to say the truth, perfectly unvital, a sphere in which spiritual progression is impossible. But let criticism leave church-rates and the franchise alone, and in the most candid spirit, without a single lurking thought of practical innovation, confront with our dithyramb this paragraph on which I stumbled in a newspaper soon after reading Mr. Roebuck:

A shocking child murder has just been committed at Nottingham. A girl named Wragg left the workhouse there on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was soon afterwards found dead on Mapperly Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody.

Nothing but that; but, in juxtaposition with the absolute eulogies of Mr. Adderley and Mr. Roebuck, how eloquent, how suggestive are those few lines! "Our old Anglo-Saxon breed, the best in the whole world!"—how much that is harsh and ill-favored there is in this best! *Wragg!* If we are to talk of ideal perfection, of "the best in the whole world," has any one reflected what a touch of grossness in our race, what an original shortcoming in the more delicate spiritual perceptions, is shown by the natural growth amongst us of such hideous names,—Higginbottom, Stiggins, Bugg! In Ionia and Attica they were luckier in this respect than "the best race in the world"; by the *Ilissus* there was no *Wragg*, poor thing! And "our unrivaled happiness";—what an element of grimness, bareness, and hideousness mixes with it and blurs it; the

<sup>1</sup>Charles Bowyer Adderley (1814–1905), first Baron Norton, a Tory statesman.

<sup>2</sup>The Right Hon. J. A. Roebuck (1801–1879), barrister and politician.

<sup>3</sup>*Phigeneia auf Tauris*, I, ii, 91–92. Arnold translates the lines in the concluding portion of the sentence.

<sup>4</sup>*i.e.*, widen the franchise, which at this time was restricted to occupants of premises worth not less than £10 a year.

<sup>5</sup>Taxes levied on assessed property in a parish for the maintenance of the church.



workhouse, the dismal Mapperly Hills,—how dismal those who have seen them will remember;—the gloom, the smoke, the cold, the strangled illegitimate child! “I ask you whether the world over, or in past history, there is anything like it?” Perhaps not, one is inclined to answer; but at any rate, in that case, the world is very much to be pitied. And the final touch,—short, bleak, and inhuman: *Wragg is in custody*. The sex lost in the confusion of our unrivaled happiness; or (shall I say?) the superfluous Christian name lopped off by the straight-forward vigor of our old Anglo-Saxon breed! There is profit for the spirit in such contrasts as this; criticism serves the cause of perfection by establishing them. By eluding sterile conflict, by refusing to remain in the sphere where alone narrow and relative conceptions have any worth and validity, criticism may diminish its momentary importance, but only in this way has it a chance of gaining admittance for those wider and more perfect conceptions to which all its duty is really owed. Mr. Roebuck will have a poor opinion of an adversary who replies to his defiant songs of triumph only by murmuring under his breath, *Wragg is in custody*; but in no other way will these songs of triumph be induced gradually to moderate themselves, to get rid of what in them is excessive and offensive, and to fall into a softer and truer key.

It will be said that it is a very subtle and indirect action which I am thus prescribing for criticism, and that by embracing in this manner the Indian virtue of detachment and abandoning the sphere of practical life, it condemns itself to a slow and obscure work. Slow and obscure it may be, but it is the only proper work of criticism. The mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are; very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them. On these inadequate ideas repose, and must repose, the general practice of the world. That is as much as saying that whoever sets himself to see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle resolutely doing its own work that adequate ideas will ever get current at all. The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex; most of all will this be the case where that life is so powerful as it is in Eng-

land. But it is only by remaining collected, and refusing to lend himself to the point of view of the practical man, that the critic can do the practical man any service; and it is only by the greatest sincerity in pursuing his own course, and by at last convincing even the practical man of his sincerity, that he can escape misunderstandings which perpetually threaten him.

For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions truth and the highest culture greatly find their account. But it is not easy to lead a practical man—unless you reassure him as to your practical intentions, you have no chance of leading him—to see that a thing which he has always been used to look at from one side only, which he greatly values, and which, looked at from that side, more than deserves, perhaps, all the prizing and admiring which he bestows upon it,—that this thing, looked at from another side, may appear much less beneficent and beautiful, and yet retain all its claims to our practical allegiance. Where shall we find language innocent enough, how shall we make the spotless purity of our intentions evident enough, to enable us to say to the political Englishman that the British Constitution itself, which, seen from the practical side, looks such a magnificent organ of progress and virtue, seen from the speculative side,—with its compromises, its love of facts, its horror of theory, its studied avoidance of clear thoughts,—that, seen from this side, our august Constitution sometimes looks,—forgive me, shade of Lord Somers!—a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines?<sup>2</sup> How is Cobbett<sup>3</sup> to say this and not be misunderstood, blackened as he is with the smoke of a lifelong conflict in the field of political practice? how is Mr. Carlyle to say it and not be misunderstood, after his furious raid into this field with his *Latter-Day Pamphlets*? how is Mr. Ruskin, after his pugnacious political economy? I say, the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere, if he wants to make a beginning for that more free speculative treatment of things, which may perhaps

<sup>1</sup>John, Baron Somers (1651–1716), Lord Chancellor. He was a member of the Convention Parliament in 1689.

<sup>2</sup>Arnold's term for the solid, respectable, unenlightened middle class.

<sup>3</sup>William Cobbett (1762–1835), essayist and politician.



one day make its benefits felt even in this sphere, but in a natural and thence irresistible manner.

Do what he will, however, the critic will still remain exposed to frequent misunderstandings, and nowhere so much as in this country. For here people are particularly indisposed even to comprehend that without this free disinterested treatment of things, truth and the highest culture are out of the question. So immersed are they in practical life, so accustomed to take all their notions from this life and its processes, that they are apt to think that truth and culture themselves can be reached by the processes of this life, and that it is an impertinent singularity to think of reaching them in any other. "We are all *terra filii*,"<sup>1</sup> cries their eloquent advocate; "all Philistines together. Away with the notion of proceeding by any other course than the course dear to the Philistines; let us have a social movement, let us organize and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought, let us call it *the liberal party*, and let us all stick to each other, and back each other up. Let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many; don't let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought; we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along: if one of us speaks well, applaud him; if one of us speaks ill, applaud him too; we are all in the same movement, we are all liberals, we are all in pursuit of truth." In this way the pursuit of truth becomes really a social, practical, pleasurable affair, almost requiring a chairman, a secretary, and advertisements; with the excitement of an occasional scandal, with a little resistance to give the happy sense of difficulty overcome; but, in general, plenty of bustle and very little thought. To act is so easy, as Goethe says; to think is so hard! It is true that the critic has many temptations to go with the stream, to make one of the party of movement, one of these *terra filii*; it seems ungracious to refuse to be a *terra filius*, when so many excellent people are; but the critic's duty is to refuse, or, if resistance is vain, at least to cry with Obermann: *Périssons en résistant*.<sup>2</sup>

How serious a matter it is to try and resist, I had ample opportunity of experiencing when I ventured some time ago to criticize the celebrated first volume of Bishop Colenso.<sup>3</sup> The echoes of the storm which was then raised I still, from time to time, hear grumbling round me. That storm arose out of a misunderstanding almost inevitable. It is a result of no little culture to attain to a clear perception that science and religion are two wholly different things; the multitude will for ever confuse them, but happily that is of no great real importance, for while the multitude imagines itself to live by its false science, it does really live by its true religion. Dr. Colenso, however, in his first volume did all he could to strengthen the confusion,<sup>4</sup> and to make it dangerous. He did this with the best intentions, I freely admit, and with the most candid ignorance that this was the natural effect of what he was doing; but, says Joubert, "Ignorance, which in matters of morals extenuates the crime, is itself, in intellectual matters, a crime of the first order." I criticized Bishop Colenso's speculative confusion. Immediately there was a cry raised: "What is this? here is a liberal attacking a liberal. Do not you belong to the movement? are not you a friend of truth? Is not Bishop Colenso in pursuit of truth? then speak with proper respect of his book." Dr. Stanley<sup>5</sup> is another friend of truth, and you speak with proper respect of his book; why make these invidious differences? both books are excellent, admirable, liberal; Bishop Colenso's perhaps the most so, because it is the

<sup>3</sup>So sincere is my dislike to all personal attack and controversy, that I abstain from reprinting, at this distance of time from the occasion which called them forth, the essays in which I criticized Dr. Colenso's book [the first volume of his examination of the *Pentateuch*]; I feel bound, however, after all that has passed, to make here a final declaration of my sincere impenitence for having published them. Nay, I cannot forbear repeating yet once more, for his benefit and that of his readers, this sentence from my original remarks upon him: *There is truth of science and truth of religion; truth of science does not become truth of religion till it is made religious.* And I will add: Let us have all the science there is from the men of science; from the men of religion let us have religion (Arnold's note). J. W. Colenso (1814-1883) endeavored to show that the *Pentateuch* was largely unhistorical and that much of the legislation attributed to Moses was really centuries later in date.

<sup>4</sup>It has been said I make it "a crime against literary criticism and the higher culture to attempt to inform the ignorant." Need I point out that the ignorant are not informed by being confirmed in a confusion? (Arnold's note.)

<sup>5</sup>Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815-1881), Dean of Westminster Abbey, who was a supporter of Colenso. "His book" is entitled *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church* (1863-1865).

<sup>1</sup>Children of earth—i.e., "nobodies."

<sup>2</sup>Let us perish resisting. *Obermann* is the title of a series of letters written by Étienne Pivert de Senancour (1770-1846), published at Paris in 1804.

boldest, and will have the best practical consequences for the liberal cause. Do you want to encourage to the attack of a brother liberal his, and your, and our implacable enemies, the *Church and State Review* or the *Record*, —the High Church rhinoceros and the Evangelical hyena? Be silent, therefore; or rather speak, speak as loud as ever you can, and go into ecstasies over the eighty and odd pigeons."<sup>1</sup>

But criticism cannot follow this coarse and indiscriminate method. It is unfortunately possible for a man in pursuit of truth to write a book which reposes upon a false conception. Even the practical consequences of a book are to genuine criticism no recommendation of it, if the book is, in the highest sense, blundering. I see that a lady who herself, too, is in pursuit of truth, and who writes with great ability, but a little too much, perhaps, under the influence of the practical spirit of the English liberal movement, classes Bishop Colenso's book and M. Renan's<sup>2</sup> together, in her survey of the religious state of Europe,<sup>3</sup> as facts of the same order, works, both of them, of "great importance"; "great ability, power, and skill"; Bishop Colenso's, perhaps the most powerful; at least, Miss Cobbe gives special expression to her gratitude that to Bishop Colenso "has been given the strength to grasp, and the courage to teach, truths of such deep import." In the same way, more than one popular writer has compared him to Luther. Now it is just this kind of false estimate which the critical spirit is, it seems to me, bound to resist. It is really the strongest possible proof of the low ebb at which, in England, the critical spirit is, that while the critical hit in the religious literature of Germany is Dr. Strauss's<sup>4</sup> book, in that of France M. Renan's book, the book of Bishop Colenso is the critical hit in the religious literature of England.<sup>5</sup> Bishop Colenso's book reposes on a total misconception of the essential elements of the religious

problem, as that problem is now presented for solution. To criticism, therefore, which seeks to have the best that is known and thought on this problem, it is, however well meant, of no importance whatever. M. Renan's book attempts a new synthesis of the elements furnished to us by the Four Gospels. It attempts, in my opinion, a synthesis, perhaps premature, perhaps impossible, certainly not successful. Up to the present time, at any rate, we must acquiesce in Fleury's sentence on such recastings of the Gospel-story: *Qui-conque s'imagine la pouvoir mieux écrire, ne l'entend pas*.<sup>6</sup> M. Renan had himself passed by anticipation a like sentence on his own work, when he said: "If a new presentation of the character of Jesus were offered to me, I would not have it; its very clearness would be, in my opinion, the best proof of its insufficiency." His friends may with perfect justice rejoin that at the sight of the Holy Land, and of the actual scene of the Gospel-story, all the current of M. Renan's thoughts may have naturally changed, and a new casting of that story irresistibly suggested itself to him; and that this is just a case for applying Cicero's maxim: Change of mind is not inconsistency—*nemo doctus unquam mutationem consilii inconstantiam dixit esse*.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, for criticism, M. Renan's first thought must still be the truer one, as long as his new casting so fails more fully to commend itself, more fully (to use Coleridge's happy phrase about the Bible) to *find us*.<sup>8</sup> Still M. Renan's attempt is, for criticism, of the most real interest and importance, since, with all its difficulty, a fresh synthesis of the New Testament *data*,—not a making war on them, in Voltaire's fashion, not a leaving them out of mind, in the world's fashion, but the putting a new construction upon them, the taking them from under the old, adoptive, traditional, unspiritual point of view and placing them under a new one,—is the very essence of the religious problem, as now presented; and only by efforts in this direction can it receive a solution.

Again, in the same spirit in which she judges Bishop Colenso, Miss Cobbe, like so many earnest liberals of our practical race, both here

<sup>1</sup>Colenso in commenting on Leviticus, x, 16, 20, had written: "The very pigeons to be brought as sin-offerings for the birth of children would have averaged according to the story more than 250 a day; and each priest would have had to eat daily more than 80 for his own portion 'in the most holy place!'"

<sup>2</sup>*The Vie de Jésus* (1863) by Ernest Renan (1823-1892).

<sup>3</sup>*Broken Lights* (1864) by Frances Power Cobbe (1822-1904).

<sup>4</sup>*Leben Jesu* (1835) by David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874).

<sup>5</sup>It should be said that there was more of feeling than of logic in Arnold's attitude towards Colenso, that his work was of real importance, and that his chief conclusions are now generally accepted.

<sup>6</sup>Whoever imagines that he could write it better does not understand it. From the Preface to the *Ecclesiastical History* (1691) of Claude Fleury (1640-1723).

<sup>7</sup>*Letters to Atticus*, xvi, 7, 3.

<sup>8</sup>See *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*, Letter I.



and in America, herself sets vigorously about a positive reconstruction of religion, about making a religion of the future out of hand, or at least setting about making it; we must not rest, she and they are always thinking and saying, in negative criticism, we must be creative and constructive; hence we have such works as her recent *Religious Duty*, and works still more considerable, perhaps, by others, which will be in everyone's mind. These works often have much ability; they often spring out of sincere convictions, and a sincere wish to do good; and they sometimes, perhaps, do good. Their fault is (if I may be permitted to say so) one which they have in common with the British College of Health, in the New Road. Every one knows the British College of Health; it is that building with the lion and the statue of the Goddess Hygeia<sup>1</sup> before it; at least, I am sure about the lion, though I am not absolutely certain about the Goddess Hygeia. This building does credit, perhaps, to the resources of Dr. Morrison<sup>2</sup> and his disciples; but it falls a good deal short of one's idea of what a British College of Health ought to be. In England, where we hate public interference and love individual enterprise, we have a whole crop of places like the British College of Health; the grand name without the grand thing. Unluckily, creditable to individual enterprise as they are, they tend to impair our taste by making us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to a public institution. The same may be said of the religions of the future of Miss Cobbe and others. Creditable, like the British College of Health, to the resources of their authors, they yet tend to make us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to religious constructions. The historic religions, with all their faults, have had this; it certainly belongs to the religious sentiment, when it truly flowers, to have this; and we impoverish our spirit if we allow a religion of the future without it. What then is the duty of criticism here? To take the practical point of view, to applaud the liberal movement and all its works,—its New Road religions of the future into the bargain,—for their general utility's sake? By no means; but to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while

they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal.

For criticism, these are elementary laws; but they never can be popular, and in this country they have been very little followed, and one meets with immense obstacles in following them. That is a reason for asserting them again and again. Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. Even with well-meant efforts of the practical spirit it must express dissatisfaction, if in the sphere of the ideal they seem impoverishing and limiting. It must not hurry on to the goal because of its practical importance. It must be patient, and know how to wait; and flexible, and know how to attach itself to things and how to withdraw from them. It must be apt to study and praise elements that for the fullness of spiritual perfection are wanted, even though they belong to a power which in the practical sphere may be maleficent. It must be apt to discern the spiritual shortcomings or illusions of powers that in the practical sphere may be beneficent. And this without any notion of favoring or injuring, in the practical sphere, one power or the other; without any notion of playing off, in this sphere, one power against the other. When one looks, for instance, at the English Divorce Court,—an institution which perhaps has its practical conveniences, but which in the ideal sphere is so hideous; an institution which neither makes divorce impossible nor makes it decent, which allows a man to get rid of his wife, or a wife of her husband, but makes them drag one another first, for the public edification, through a mire of unutterable infamy,—when one looks at this charming institution, I say, with its crowded benches, its newspaper-reports, and its money-compensations, this institution in which the gross unregenerate British Philistine has indeed stamped an image of himself,—one may be permitted to find the marriage-theory of Catholicism refreshing and elevating. Or when Protestantism, in virtue of its supposed rational and intellectual origin, gives the law to criticism too magisterially, criticism may and must remind it that its pretensions, in this respect, are illusive and do it harm; that the Reformation was a moral rather than an intellectual event; that Luther's theory of grace no more exactly reflects the mind of the spirit than Bossuet's philosophy of history

<sup>1</sup>The goddess of health.

<sup>2</sup>James Morison (1770-1840).



reflects it; and that there is no more antecedent probability of the Bishop of Durham's stock of ideas being agreeable to perfect reason than of Pope Pius the Ninth's. But criticism will not on that account forget the achievements of Protestantism in the practical and moral sphere; nor that, even in the intellectual sphere, Protestantism, though in a blind and stumbling manner, carried forward the Renaissance, while Catholicism threw itself violently across its path.

I lately heard a man of thought and energy contrasting the want of ardor and movement which he now found amongst young men in this country with what he remembered in his own youth, twenty years ago. "What reformers we were then!" he exclaimed; "what a zeal we had! how we canvassed every institution in Church and State, and were prepared to remodel them all on first principles!" He was inclined to regret, as a spiritual flagging, the lull which he saw. I am disposed rather to regard it as a pause in which the turn to a new mode of spiritual progress is being accomplished. Everything was long seen, by the young and ardent amongst us, in inseparable connection with politics and practical life; we have pretty well exhausted the benefits of seeing things in this connection, we have got all that can be got by so seeing them. Let us try a more disinterested mode of seeing them; let us betake ourselves more to the serener life of the mind and spirit. This life, too, may have its excesses and dangers; but they are not for us at present. Let us think of quietly enlarging our stock of true and fresh ideas, and not, as soon as we get an idea or half an idea, be running out with it into the street, and trying to make it rule there. Our ideas will, in the end, shape the world all the better for maturing a little. Perhaps in fifty years' time it will in the English House of Commons be an objection to an institution that it is an anomaly, and my friend the Member of Parliament will shudder in his grave. But let us in the meanwhile rather endeavor that in twenty years' time it may, in English literature, be an objection to a proposition that it is absurd. That will be a change so vast, that the imagination almost fails to grasp it. *Ab integro sæculorum nascitur ordo.*<sup>1</sup>

If I have insisted so much on the course

which criticism must take where politics and religion are concerned, it is because, where these burning matters are in question, it is most likely to go astray. I have wished, above all, to insist on the attitude which criticism should adopt towards everything; on its right tone and temper of mind. Then comes the question as to the subject-matter which criticism should most seek. Here, in general, its course is determined for it by the idea which is the law of its being; the idea of a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas. By the very nature of things, as England is not all the world, much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth, must be foreign; by the nature of things, again, it is just this that we are least likely to know, while English thought is streaming in upon us from all sides and takes excellent care that we shall not be ignorant of its existence; the English critic, therefore, must dwell much on foreign thought, and with particular heed on any part of it, which, while significant and fruitful in itself, is for any reason specially likely to escape him. Again, judging is often spoken of as the critic's one business; and so in some sense it is; but the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is the valuable one; and thus knowledge, and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself; and it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it,—but insensibly, and in the second place not the first, as a sort of companion and clue, not as an abstract lawgiver,—that he will generally do most good to his readers. Sometimes, no doubt, for the sake of establishing an author's place in literature, and his relation to a central standard (and if this is not done, how are we to get at our *best in the world?*), criticism may have to deal with a subject-matter so familiar that fresh knowledge is out of the question, and then it must be all judgment; an enunciation and detailed application of principles. Here the great safeguard is never to let oneself become abstract, always to retain an intimate and lively consciousness of the truth of what one is saying, and, the moment this fails us, to be sure that something is wrong. Still, under all circum-

<sup>1</sup>The cycle of the ages is born anew (Virgil, *Eclogue* IV, 5).

stances, this mere judgment and application of principles is, in itself, not the most satisfactory work to the critic; like mathematics, it is tautological, and cannot well give us, like fresh learning, the sense of creative activity.

But stop, some one will say; all this talk is of no practical use to us whatever; this criticism of yours is not what we have in our minds when we speak of criticism; when we speak of critics and criticism, we mean critics and criticism of the current English literature of the day; when you offer to tell criticism its function, it is to this criticism that we expect you to address yourself. I am sorry for it, for I am afraid I must disappoint these expectations. I am bound by my own definition of criticism: *a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world*. How much of current English literature comes into this "best that is known and thought in the world"? Not very much, I fear; certainly less, at this moment, than of the current literature of France or Germany. Well, then, am I to alter my definition of criticism, in order to meet the requirements of a number of practising English critics, who, after all, are free in their choice of a business? That would be making criticism lend itself just to one of those alien practical considerations, which, I have said, are so fatal to it. One may say, indeed, to those who have to deal with the mass—so much better disregarded—of current English literature, that they may at all events endeavor, in dealing with this, to try it, so far as they can, by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world; one may say, that to get anywhere near this standard, every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own; and the more unlike his own, the better. But, after all, the criticism I am really concerned with,—the criticism which alone can much help us for the future, the criticism which, throughout Europe, is at the present day meant, when so much stress is laid on the importance of criticism and the critical spirit,—is a criticism which regards Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Spe-

cial, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?

There is so much inviting us!—what are we to take? what will nourish us in growth towards perfection? That is the question which, with the immense field of life and of literature lying before him, the critic has to answer; for himself first, and afterwards for others. In this idea of the critic's business the essays brought together in the following pages<sup>1</sup> have had their origin; in this idea, widely different as are their subjects, they have, perhaps, their unity.

I conclude with what I said at the beginning: to have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive, and it is not denied to criticism to have it; but then criticism must be sincere, simple, flexible, ardent, ever widening its knowledge. Then it may have, in no contemptible measure, a joyful sense of creative activity; a sense which a man of insight and conscience will prefer to what he might derive from a poor, starved, fragmentary, inadequate creation. And at some epochs no other creation is possible.

Still, in full measure, the sense of creative activity belongs only to genuine creation; in literature we must never forget that. But what true man of letters ever can forget it? It is no such common matter for a gifted nature to come into possession of a current of true and living ideas, and to produce amidst the inspiration of them, that we are likely to underrate it. The epochs of Æschylus and Shakespeare make us feel their pre-eminence. In an epoch like those is, no doubt, the true life of a literature; there is the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon. That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness: but to have desired to enter it, to have saluted it from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among contemporaries; it will certainly be the best title to esteem with posterity.

<sup>1</sup>I.e., in *Essays in Criticism*.



LITERATURE AND  
SCIENCE<sup>1</sup>

PRACTICAL people talk with a smile of Plato and of his absolute ideas; and it is impossible to deny that Plato's ideas do often seem unpractical and impracticable, and especially when one views them in connection with the life of a great work-a-day world like the United States. The necessary staple of the life of such a world Plato regards with disdain; handicraft and trade and the working professions he regards with disdain; but what becomes of the life of an industrial modern community if you take handicraft and trade and the working professions out of it? The base mechanic arts and handicrafts, says Plato, bring about a natural weakness in the principle of excellence in a man, so that he cannot govern the ignoble growths in him, but nurses them, and cannot understand fostering any other. Those who exercise such arts and trades, as they have their bodies, he says, marred by their vulgar businesses, so they have their souls, too, bowed and broken by them. And if one of these uncomely people has a mind to seek self-culture and philosophy, Plato compares him to a bald little tinker, who has scraped together money, and has got his release from service, and has had a bath, and bought a new coat, and is rigged out like a bridegroom about to marry the daughter of his master who has fallen into poor and helpless estate.<sup>2</sup>

Nor do the working professions fare any better than trade at the hands of Plato. He draws for us an inimitable picture of the working lawyer, and of his life of bondage; he shows how this bondage from his youth up has stunted and warped him, and made him small and crooked of soul, encompassing him with difficulties which he is not man enough to rely on justice and truth as means to encounter, but has recourse, for help out of them, to falsehood and wrong. And so, says Plato, this poor creature is bent and broken, and grows up from boy to man without a particle of soundness in him, although exceedingly smart and clever in his own esteem.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This essay was read as a Rede Lecture at Cambridge University and was published in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1882. It was then recast and used as a lecture in America in 1883-1884. It was reprinted in its later form (here reproduced) in *Discourses in America*, 1885.

<sup>2</sup>*Republic*, VI, 495.

<sup>3</sup>*Theaetetus*, 172-173.

One cannot refuse to admire the artist who draws these pictures. But we say to ourselves that his ideas show the influence of a primitive and obsolete order of things, when the warrior caste and the priestly caste were alone in honor, and the humble work of the world was done by slaves. We have now changed all that; the modern majority consists in that, as Emerson declares,<sup>4</sup> and in work, we may add, principally of such plain and dusty kind as the work of cultivators of the ground, handicraftsmen, men of trade and business, men of the working professions. Above all is this true in a great industrious community such as that of the United States.

Now education, many people go on to say, is still mainly governed by the ideas of men like Plato, who lived when the warrior caste and the priestly or philosophical class were alone in honor, and the really useful part of the community were slaves. It is an education fitted for persons of leisure in such a community. This education passed from Greece and Rome to the feudal communities of Europe, where also the warrior caste and the priestly caste were alone held in honor, and where the really useful and working part of the community, though not nominally slaves as in the pagan world, were practically not much better off than slaves, and not more seriously regarded. And how absurd it is, people end by saying, to inflict this education upon an industrious modern community, where very few indeed are persons of leisure, and the mass to be considered has not leisure, but is bound, for its own great good, and for the great good of the world at large, to plain labor and to industrial pursuits, and the education in question tends necessarily to make men dissatisfied with these pursuits and unfitted for them!

That is what is said. So far I must defend Plato, as to plead that his view of education and studies is in the general, as it seems to me, sound enough, and fitted for all sorts and conditions of men, whatever their pursuits may be. "An intelligent man," says Plato, "will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness, and wisdom, and will less value the others."<sup>5</sup> I cannot consider that a bad description of the aim of

<sup>4</sup>In his essay entitled *Literary Ethics*. Emerson's word is "majesty," not "majority."

<sup>5</sup>*Republic*, IX, 591.



education, and of the motives which should govern us in the choice of studies, whether we are preparing ourselves for a hereditary seat in the English House of Lords or for the pork trade in Chicago.

Still I admit that Plato's world was not ours, that his scorn of trade and handicraft is fantastic, that he had no conception of a great industrial community such as that of the United States, and that such a community must and will shape its education to suit its own needs. If the usual education handed down to it from the past does not suit it, it will certainly before long drop this and try another. The usual education in the past has been mainly literary. The question is whether the studies which were long supposed to be the best for all of us are practically the best now; whether others are not better. The tyranny of the past, many think, weighs on us injuriously in the predominance given to letters in education. The question is raised whether, to meet the needs of our modern life, the predominance ought not now to pass from letters to science; and naturally the question is nowhere raised with more energy than here in the United States. The design of abasing what is called "mere literary instruction and education," and of exalting what is called "sound, extensive, and practical scientific knowledge,"<sup>1</sup> is, in this intensely modern world of the United States, even more perhaps than in Europe, a very popular design, and makes great and rapid progress.

I am going to ask whether the present movement for ousting letters from their old predominance in education, and for transferring the predominance in education to the natural sciences, whether this brisk and flourishing movement ought to prevail, and whether it is likely that in the end it really will prevail. An objection may be raised which I will anticipate. My own studies have been almost wholly in letters, and my visits to the field of the natural sciences have been very slight and inadequate, although those sciences have always strongly moved my curiosity. A man of letters, it will perhaps be said, is not competent to discuss the comparative merits of letters and natural science as means of education.

To this objection I reply, first of all, that his incompetence, if he attempts the discussion but is really incompetent for it, will be abundantly visible; nobody will be taken in; he will have plenty of sharp observers and critics to save mankind from that danger. But the line I am going to follow is, as you will soon discover, so extremely simple, that perhaps it may be followed without failure even by one who for a more ambitious line of discussion would be quite incompetent.

Some of you may possibly remember a phrase of mine which has been the object of a good deal of comment; an observation to the effect that in our culture, the aim being to *know ourselves and the world*, we have, as he means to this end, to *know the best which has been thought and said in the world*. A man of science, who is also an excellent writer and the very prince of debaters, Professor Huxley, in a discourse at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's college at Birmingham, laying hold of this phrase, expanded it by quoting some more words of mine, which are these:

The civilized world is to be regarded as now being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have for their proper outfit a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special local and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme.<sup>2</sup>

Now on my phrase, thus enlarged, Professor Huxley remarks that when I speak of the above-mentioned knowledge as enabling us to know ourselves and the world, I assert *literature* to contain the materials which suffice for thus making us know ourselves and the world. But it is not by any means clear, says he, that after having learned all which ancient and modern literatures have to tell us, we have laid a sufficiently broad and deep foundation for that criticism of life, that knowledge of ourselves and the world, which constitutes culture. On the contrary, Professor Huxley declares that he finds himself "wholly unable to admit that either nations or individuals will really advance, if their outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical science. An army

<sup>1</sup>These phrases of Sir Josiah Mason's, Arnold takes from Huxley's essay on *Science and Culture*, of which he makes large use in the present discourse. The two essays should be studied in connection with each other.

<sup>2</sup>From Arnold's essay on *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*.

without weapons of precision, and with no particular base of operations, might more hopefully enter upon a campaign on the Rhine, than a man, devoid of a knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, upon a criticism of life."

This shows how needful it is for those who are to discuss any matter together, to have a common understanding as to the sense of the terms they employ,—how needful, and how difficult. What Professor Huxley says, implies just the reproach which is so often brought against the study of *belles lettres*, as they are called: that the study is an elegant one, but slight and ineffectual; a smattering of Greek and Latin and other ornamental things, of little use for any one whose object is to get at truth, and to be a practical man. So, too, M. Renan talks of the "superficial humanism" of a school-course which treats us as if we were all going to be poets, writers, preachers, orators, and he opposes this humanism to positive science, or the critical search after truth.<sup>1</sup> And there is always a tendency in those who are remonstrating against the predominance of letters in education, to understand by letters *belles lettres*, and by *belles lettres* a superficial humanism, the opposite of science or true knowledge.

But when we talk of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, for instance, which is the knowledge people have called the humanities, I for my part mean a knowledge which is something more than a superficial humanism, mainly decorative. "I call all teaching scientific," says Wolf,<sup>2</sup> the critic of Homer, "which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources. For example: a knowledge of classical antiquity is scientific when the remains of classical antiquity are correctly studied in the original languages." There can be no doubt that Wolf is perfectly right; that all learning is scientific which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources, and that a genuine humanism is scientific.

When I speak of knowing Greek and Roman antiquity, therefore, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, I mean more than a knowledge of so much vocabulary, so much grammar, so many portions of authors in the

Greek and Latin languages. I mean knowing the Greeks and Romans, and their life and genius, and what they were and did in the world; what we get from them, and what is its value. That, at least, is the ideal; and when we talk of endeavoring to know Greek and Roman antiquity, as a help to knowing ourselves and the world, we mean endeavoring so to know them as to satisfy this ideal, however much we may still fall short of it.

The same also as to knowing our own and other modern nations, with the like aim of getting to understand ourselves and the world. To know the best that has been thought and said by the modern nations, is to know, says Professor Huxley, "only what modern literatures have to tell us; it is the criticism of life contained in modern literature." And yet "the distinctive character of our times," he urges, "lies in the vast and constantly increasing part which is played by natural knowledge." And how, therefore, can a man, devoid of knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, enter hopefully upon a criticism of modern life?

Let us, I say, be agreed about the meaning of the terms we are using. I talk of knowing the best which has been thought and uttered in the world; Professor Huxley says this means knowing *literature*. Literature is a large word; it may mean everything written with letters or printed in a book. Euclid's *Elements* and Newton's *Principia* are thus literature. All knowledge that reaches us through books is literature. But by literature Professor Huxley means *belles lettres*. He means to make me say, that knowing the best which has been thought and said by the modern nations is knowing their *belles lettres* and no more. And this is no sufficient equipment, he argues, for a criticism of modern life. But as I do not mean, by knowing ancient Rome, knowing merely more or less of Latin *belles lettres*, and taking no account of Rome's military, and political, and legal, and administrative work in the world; and as, by knowing ancient Greece, I understand knowing her as the giver of Greek art, and the guide to a free and right use of reason and to scientific method, and the founder of our mathematics and physics and astronomy and biology,—I understand knowing her as all this, and not merely knowing certain Greek poems, and histories, and treatises, and speeches,—so as

<sup>1</sup>In the essay on *L'Instruction supérieure en France*, in his *Questions Contemporaines*.

<sup>2</sup>Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824), generally regarded as the founder of scientific classical philology.



to the knowledge of modern nations, also. By knowing modern nations, I mean not merely knowing their *belles lettres*, but knowing also what has been done by such men as Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Darwin. "Our ancestors learned," says Professor Huxley, "that the earth is the center of the visible universe, and that man is the cynosure of things terrestrial; and more especially was it inculcated that the course of nature had no fixed order, but that it could be, and constantly was, altered." But for us now, continues Professor Huxley, "the notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that nature is the expression of a definite order, with which nothing interferes." "And yet," he cries, "the purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the humanists in our day gives no inkling of all this!"

In due place and time I will just touch upon that vexed question of classical education; but at present the question is as to what is meant by knowing the best which modern nations have thought and said. It is not knowing their *belles lettres* merely which is meant. To know Italian *belles lettres* is not to know Italy, and to know English *belles lettres* is not to know England. Into knowing Italy and England there comes a great deal more, Galileo and Newton amongst it. The reproach of being a superficial humanism, a tincture of *belles lettres*, may attach rightly enough to some other disciplines; but to the particular discipline recommended when I proposed knowing the best that has been thought and said in the world, it does not apply. In that best I certainly include what in modern times has been thought and said by the great observers and knowers of nature.

There is, therefore, really no question between Professor Huxley and me as to whether knowing the great results of the modern scientific study of nature is not required as a part of our culture, as well as knowing the products of literature and art. But to follow the processes by which those results are reached, ought, say the friends of physical science, to be made the staple of education for the bulk of mankind. And here there does arise a

question between those whom Professor Huxley calls with playful sarcasm "the Levites of culture,"<sup>1</sup> and those whom the poor humanist is sometimes apt to regard as its Nebuchadnezzars.<sup>2</sup>

The great results of the scientific investigation of nature we are agreed upon knowing, but how much of our study are we bound to give to the processes by which those results are reached? The results have their visible bearing on human life. But all the processes, too, all the items of fact, by which those results are reached and established, are interesting. All knowledge is interesting to a wise man, and the knowledge of nature is interesting to all men. It is very interesting to know, that, from the albuminous white of the egg, the chick in the egg gets the materials for its flesh, bones, blood, and feathers; while, from the fatty yolk of the egg, it gets the heat and energy which enable it at length to break its shell and begin the world. It is less interesting, perhaps, but still it is interesting, to know that when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water. Moreover, it is quite true that the habit of dealing with facts, which is given by the study of nature, is, as the friends of physical science praise it for being, an excellent discipline. The appeal, in the study of nature, is constantly to observation and experiment; not only is it said that the thing is so, but we can be made to see that it is so. Not only does a man tell us that when a taper burns the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, as a man may tell us, if he likes, that Charon is punting his ferry-boat on the river Styx, or that Victor Hugo is a sublime poet, or Mr. Gladstone the most admirable of statesmen; but we are made to see that the conversion into carbonic acid and water does actually happen. This reality of natural knowledge it is, which makes the friends of physical science contrast it, as a knowledge of things, with the humanist's knowledge, which is, say they, a knowledge of words. And hence Professor Huxley is moved to lay it down that, "for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education." And a certain President of the Section for Mechanical Science in the

<sup>1</sup>See Numbers, iii, 14-32.

<sup>2</sup>The Babylonian conqueror of Jerusalem. See Daniel, *passim*.



British Association is, in Scripture phrase, "very bold," and declares that if a man, in his mental training, "has substituted literature and history for natural science, he has chosen the less useful alternative." But whether we go these lengths or not, we must all admit that in natural science the habit gained of dealing with facts is a most valuable discipline, and that every one should have some experience of it.

More than this, however, is demanded by the reformers. It is proposed to make the training in natural science the main part of education, for the great majority of mankind at any rate. And here, I confess, I part company with the friends of physical science, with whom up to this point I have been agreeing. In differing from them, however, I wish to proceed with the utmost caution and diffidence. The smallness of my own acquaintance with the disciplines of natural science is ever before my mind, and I am fearful of doing these disciplines an injustice. The ability and pugnacity of the partisans of natural science make them formidable persons to contradict. The tone of tentative inquiry, which befits a being of dim faculties and bounded knowledge, is the tone I would wish to take and not to depart from. At present it seems to me, that those who are for giving to natural knowledge, as they call it, the chief place in the education of the majority of mankind, leave one important thing out of their account: the constitution of human nature. But I put this forward on the strength of some facts not at all reconcileable, very far from it; facts capable of being stated in the simplest possible fashion, and to which, if I so state them, the man of science will, I am sure, be willing to allow their due weight.

Deny the facts altogether, I think, he hardly can. He can hardly deny, that when we set ourselves to enumerate the powers which go to the building up of human life, and say that they are the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, and the power of social life and manners,—he can hardly deny that this scheme, though drawn in rough and plain lines enough, and not pretending to scientific exactness, does yet give a fairly true representation of the matter. Human nature is built up by these powers; we have the need for them all. • When we have rightly met and adjusted the claims

of them all, we shall then be in a fair way for getting soberness and righteousness, with wisdom. This is evident enough, and the friends of physical science would admit it.

But perhaps they may not have sufficiently observed another thing: namely, that the several powers just mentioned are not isolated, but there is, in the generality of mankind, a perpetual tendency to relate them one to another in divers ways. With one such way of relating them I am particularly concerned now. Following our instinct for intellect and knowledge, we acquire pieces of knowledge; and presently, in the generality of men, there arises the desire to relate these pieces of knowledge to our sense for conduct, to our sense for beauty,—and there is weariness and dissatisfaction if the desire is balked. Now in this desire lies, I think, the strength of that hold which letters have upon us.

All knowledge is, as I said just now, interesting; and even items of knowledge which from the nature of the case cannot well be related, but must stand isolated in our thoughts, have their interest. Even lists of exceptions have their interest. If we are studying Greek accents, it is interesting to know that *país* and *pas*, and some other monosyllables of the same form of declension, do not take the circumflex upon the last syllable of the genitive plural, but vary, in this respect, from the common rule. If we are studying physiology, it is interesting to know that the pulmonary artery carries dark blood and the pulmonary vein carries bright blood, departing in this respect from the common rule for the division of labor between the veins and the arteries. But everyone knows how we seek naturally to combine the pieces of our knowledge together, to bring them under general rules, to relate them to principles; and how unsatisfactory and tiresome it would be to go on for ever learning lists of exceptions, or accumulating items of fact which must stand isolated.

Well, that same need of relating our knowledge, which operates here within the sphere of our knowledge itself, we shall find operating, also, outside that sphere. We experience, as we go on learning and knowing,—the vast majority of us experience,—the need of relating what we have learned and known to the sense which we have in us for conduct, to the sense which we have in us for beauty.

A certain Greek prophetess of Mantinea in Arcadia, Diotima by name, once explained to the philosopher Socrates that love, and impulse, and bent of all kinds, is, in fact, nothing else but the desire in men that good should for ever be present to them. This desire for good, Diotima assured Socrates, is our fundamental desire, of which fundamental desire every impulse in us is only some one particular form.<sup>1</sup> And therefore this fundamental desire it is, I suppose,—this desire in men that good should be for ever present to them,—which acts in us when we feel the impulse for relating our knowledge to our sense for conduct and to our sense for beauty. At any rate, with men in general the instinct exists. Such is human nature. And the instinct, it will be admitted, is innocent, and human nature is preserved by our following the lead of its innocent instincts. Therefore, in seeking to gratify this instinct in question, we are following the instinct of self-preservation in humanity.

But, no doubt, some kinds of knowledge cannot be made to directly serve the instinct in question, cannot be directly related to the sense for beauty, to the sense for conduct. These are instrument-knowledges; they lead on to other knowledges, which can. A man who passes his life in instrument-knowledges is a specialist. They may be invaluable as instruments to something beyond, for those who have the gift thus to employ them; and they may be disciplines in themselves wherein it is useful for everyone to have some schooling. But it is inconceivable that the generality of men should pass all their mental life with Greek accents or with formal logic. My friend Professor Sylvester,<sup>2</sup> who is one of the first mathematicians in the world, holds transcendental doctrines as to the virtue of mathematics, but those doctrines are not for common men. In the very Senate House and heart of our English Cambridge<sup>3</sup> I once ventured, though not without an apology for my profaneness, to hazard the opinion that for the majority of mankind a little of mathematics, even, goes a long way. Of course this is quite consistent with their being of immense importance as an instrument to something

else; but it is the few who have the aptitude for thus using them, not the bulk of mankind.

The natural sciences do not, however, stand on the same footing with these instrument-knowledges. Experience shows us that the generality of men will find more interest in learning that, when a taper burns, the wax is converted into carbonic acid and water, or in learning the explanation of the phenomenon of dew, or in learning how the circulation of the blood is carried on, than they find in learning that the genitive plural of *pais* and *pas* does not take the circumflex on the termination. And one piece of natural knowledge is added to another, and others are added to that, and at last we come to propositions so interesting as Mr. Darwin's famous proposition that "our ancestor was a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits."<sup>4</sup> Or we come to propositions of such reach and magnitude as those which Professor Huxley delivers, when he says that the notions of our forefathers about the beginning and the end of the world were all wrong, and that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes.

Interesting, indeed, these results of science are, important they are, and we should all of us be acquainted with them. But what I now wish you to mark is, that we are still, when they are propounded to us and we receive them, we are still in the sphere of intellect and knowledge. And for the generality of men there will be found, I say, to arise, when they have duly taken in the proposition that their ancestor was "a hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits," there will be found to arise an invincible desire to relate this proposition to the sense in us for conduct, and to the sense in us for beauty. But this the men of science will not do for us, and will hardly even profess to do. They will give us other pieces of knowledge, other facts, about other animals and their ancestors, or about plants, or about stones, or about stars; and they may finally bring us to those great "general conceptions of the universe, which are forced upon us all," says Professor Huxley, "by the progress of physical science." But still it will be *knowledge* only which they give us;

<sup>1</sup>Plato, *Symposium*, 201-212.

<sup>2</sup>James Joseph Sylvester (1814-1897), English mathematician, professor at Johns Hopkins University and later at Oxford.

<sup>3</sup>Where the study of mathematics has long been held in high esteem.

<sup>4</sup>*The Descent of Man*, pt. IV, chap. 21.



knowledge not put for us into relation with our sense for conduct, our sense for beauty, and touched with emotion by being so put; not thus put for us, and therefore, to the majority of mankind, after a certain while, unsatisfying, wearying.

Not to the born naturalist, I admit. But what do we mean by a born naturalist? We mean a man in whom the zeal for observing nature is so uncommonly strong and eminent, that it marks him off from the bulk of mankind. Such a man will pass his life happily in collecting natural knowledge and reasoning upon it, and will ask for nothing, or hardly anything, more. I have heard it said, that the sagacious and admirable naturalist whom we lost not very long ago, Mr. Darwin, once owned to a friend that for his part he did not experience the necessity for two things which most men find so necessary to them,—religion and poetry; science and the domestic affections, he thought, were enough. To a born naturalist, I can well understand that this should seem so. So absorbing is his occupation with nature, so strong his love for his occupation, that he goes on acquiring natural knowledge and reasoning upon it, and has little time or inclination for thinking about getting it related to the desire in man for conduct, the desire in man for beauty. He relates it to them for himself as he goes along, so far as he feels the need; and he draws from the domestic affections all the additional solace necessary. But then Darwins are extremely rare. Another great and admirable master of natural knowledge, Faraday,<sup>1</sup> was a Sandemanian. That is to say, he related his knowledge to his instinct for conduct and to his instinct for beauty, by the aid of that respectable Scottish sectary, Robert Sandeman.<sup>2</sup> And so strong, in general, is the demand of religion and poetry to have their share in a man, to associate themselves with his knowing, and to relieve and rejoice it, that probably, for one man amongst us with the disposition to do as Darwin did in this respect there are at least fifty with the disposition to do as Faraday.

Education lays hold upon us, in fact, by satisfying this demand. Professor Huxley

holds up to scorn medieval education, with its neglect of the knowledge of nature, its poverty even of literary studies, its formal logic devoted to "showing how and why that which the Church said was true must be true." But the great medieval universities were not brought into being, we may be sure, by the zeal for giving a jejune and contemptible education. Kings have been their nursing fathers, and queens have been their nursing mothers, but not for this. The medieval universities came into being, because the supposed knowledge, delivered by Scripture and the Church, so deeply engaged men's hearts, by so simply, easily, and powerfully relating itself to their desire for conduct, their desire for beauty. All other knowledge was dominated by this supposed knowledge and was subordinated to it, because of the surpassing strength of the hold which it gained upon the affections of men, by allying itself profoundly with their sense for conduct, their sense for beauty.

But now, says Professor Huxley, conceptions of the universe fatal to the notions held by our forefathers have been forced upon us by physical science. Grant to him that they are thus fatal, that the new conceptions must and will soon become current everywhere, and that everyone will finally perceive them to be fatal to the beliefs of our forefathers. The need of humane letters, as they are truly called, because they serve the paramount desire in men that good should be for ever present to them,—the need of humane letters, to establish a relation between the new conceptions, and our instinct for beauty, our instinct for conduct, is only the more visible. The Middle Age could do without humane letters, as it could do without the study of nature, because its supposed knowledge was made to engage its emotions so powerfully. Grant that the supposed knowledge disappears, its power of being made to engage the emotions will of course disappear along with it,—but the emotions themselves, and their claim to be engaged and satisfied, will remain. Now if we find by experience that humane letters have an undeniable power of engaging the emotions, the importance of humane letters in a man's training becomes not less, but greater, in proportion to the success of modern science in extirpating what it calls "medieval thinking."

<sup>1</sup>Michael Faraday (1791-1867), physicist and chemist.

<sup>2</sup>He was born at Perth in 1718 and died at Danbury, Connecticut, in 1771. With his father-in-law, John Glas, he founded a communistic religious sect.



Have humane letters, then, have poetry and eloquence, the power here attributed to them of engaging the emotions, and do they exercise it? And if they have it and exercise it, *how* do they exercise it, so as to exert an influence upon man's sense for conduct, his sense for beauty? Finally, even if they both can and do exert an influence upon the senses in question, how are they to relate to them the results,—the modern results,—of natural science? All these questions may be asked. First, have poetry and eloquence the power of calling out the emotions? The appeal is to experience. Experience shows that for the vast majority of men, for mankind in general, they have the power. Next, do they exercise it? They do. But then, *how* do they exercise it so as to affect man's sense for conduct, his sense for beauty? And this is perhaps a case for applying the Preacher's words: "Though a man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, farther, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it."<sup>1</sup> Why should it be one thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say, "Patience is a virtue," and quite another thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with Homer,

τλητὸν γὰρ Μοῖραι θυμὸν θέσαν  
ἀνθρώποισιν—<sup>2</sup>

"for an enduring heart have the destinies appointed to the children of men"? Why should it be one thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with the philosopher Spinoza, *Felicitas in eo consistit quod homo suum esse conservare potest*—"Man's happiness consists in his being able to preserve his own essence,"<sup>3</sup> and quite another thing, in its effect upon the emotions, to say with the Gospel, "What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, forfeit himself?"<sup>4</sup> How does this difference of effect arise? I cannot tell, and I am not much concerned to know; the important thing is that it does arise, and that we can profit by it. But how, finally, are poetry and eloquence to exercise the power of relating the modern results of natural science to man's instinct for conduct, his instinct for beauty? And here again I answer that I do not know *how* they will exercise it, but that they can and will exercise it I am sure. I do

not mean that modern philosophical poets and modern philosophical moralists are to come and relate for us, in express terms, the results of modern scientific research to our instinct for conduct, our instinct for beauty. But I mean that we shall find, as a matter of experience, if we know the best that has been thought and uttered in the world, we shall find that the art and poetry and eloquence of men who lived, perhaps, long ago, who had the most limited natural knowledge, who had the most erroneous conceptions about many important matters, we shall find that this art, and poetry, and eloquence, have in fact not only the power of refreshing and delighting us, they have also the power,—such is the strength and worth, in essentials, of their authors' criticism of life,—they have a fortifying, and elevating, and quickening, and suggestive power, capable of wonderfully helping us to relate the results of modern science to our need for conduct, our need for beauty. Homer's conceptions of the physical universe were, I imagine, grotesque; but really, under the shock of hearing from modern science that "the world is not subordinated to man's use, and that man is not the cynosure of things terrestrial," I could, for my own part, desire no better comfort than Homer's line which I quoted just now,

τλητὸν γὰρ Μοῖραι θυμὸν θέσαν  
ἀνθρώποισιν—

"for an enduring heart have the destinies appointed to the children of men"!

And the more that men's minds are cleared, the more that the results of science are frankly accepted, the more that poetry and eloquence come to be received and studied as what in truth they really are,—the criticism of life by gifted men, alive and active with extraordinary power at an unusual number of points;—so much the more will the value of humane letters, and of art also, which is an utterance having a like kind of power with theirs, be felt and acknowledged, and their place in education be secured.

Let us therefore, all of us, avoid indeed as much as possible any invidious comparison between the merits of humane letters, as means of education, and the merits of the natural sciences. But when some President of a Section for Mechanical Science insists on making the comparison, and tells us that "he

<sup>1</sup>Ecclesiastes, viii, 17 (Arnold's note).

<sup>2</sup>Iliad, XXIV, 49 (Arnold's note).

<sup>3</sup>Ethics, IV, xviii, scholium.

<sup>4</sup>St. Luke, ix, 25.

who in his training has substituted literature and history for natural science has chosen the less useful alternative," let us make answer to him that the student of humane letters only, will, at least, know also the great general conceptions brought in by modern physical science; for science, as Professor Huxley says, forces them upon us all. But the student of the natural sciences only, will, by our very hypothesis, know nothing of humane letters; not to mention that in setting himself to be perpetually accumulating natural knowledge, he sets himself to do what only specialists have in general the gift for doing genially. And so he will probably be unsatisfied, or at any rate incomplete, and even more incomplete than the student of humane letters only.

I once mentioned in a school-report, how a young man in one of our English training colleges having to paraphrase the passage in *Macbeth* beginning,

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?

turned this line into, "Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" And I remarked what a curious state of things it would be, if every pupil of our national schools knew, let us say, that the moon is two thousand one hundred and sixty miles in diameter, and thought at the same time that a good paraphrase for

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased?

was, "Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" If one is driven to choose, I think I would rather have a young person ignorant about the moon's diameter, but aware that "Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" is bad, than a young person whose education had been such as to manage things the other way.

Or to go higher than the pupils of our national schools. I have in my mind's eye a member of our British Parliament who comes to travel here in America, who afterwards relates his travels, and who shows a really masterly knowledge of the geology of this great country and of its mining capabilities, but who ends by gravely suggesting that the United States should borrow a prince from our Royal Family, and should make him their king, and should create a House of Lords of great landed proprietors after the pattern of ours; and then America, he thinks, would have her future happily and perfectly secured.

Surely, in this case, the President of the Section for Mechanical Science would himself hardly say that our member of Parliament, by concentrating himself upon geology and mineralogy, and so on, and not attending to literature and history, had "chosen the more useful alternative."

If then there is to be separation and option between humane letters on the one hand, and the natural sciences on the other, the great majority of mankind, all who have not exceptional and overpowering aptitudes for the study of nature, would do well, I cannot but think, to choose to be educated in humane letters rather than in the natural sciences. Letters will call out their being at more points, will make them live more.

I said that before I ended I would just touch on the question of classical education, and I will keep my word. Even if literature is to retain a large place in our education, yet Latin and Greek, say the friends of progress, will certainly have to go. Greek is the grand offender in the eyes of these gentlemen. The attackers of the established course of study think that against Greek, at any rate, they have irresistible arguments. Literature may perhaps be needed in education, they say; but why on earth should it be Greek literature? Why not French or German? Nay, "has not an Englishman models in his own literature of every kind of excellence?" As before, it is not on any weak pleadings of my own that I rely for convincing the gainsayers; it is on the constitution of human nature itself, and on the instinct of self-preservation in humanity. The instinct for beauty is set in human nature, as surely as the instinct for knowledge is set there, or the instinct for conduct. If the instinct for beauty is served by Greek literature and art as it is served by no other literature and art, we may trust to the instinct of self-preservation in humanity for keeping Greek as part of our culture. We may trust to it for even making the study of Greek more prevalent than it is now. Greek will come, I hope, some day to be studied more rationally than at present; but it will be increasingly studied as men increasingly feel the need in them for beauty, and how powerfully Greek art and Greek literature can serve this need. Women will again study Greek, as Lady Jane Grey did; I believe that in that chain of forts, with which the fair host of the

Amazons are now engirdling our English universities, I find that here in America, in colleges like Smith College in Massachusetts, and Vassar College in the State of New York, and in the happy families of the mixed universities out West, they are studying it already.

*Defuit una mihi symmetria prisca*,—"The antique symmetry was the one thing wanting to me," said Leonardo da Vinci; and he was an Italian. I will not presume to speak for the Americans, but I am sure that, in the Englishmen, the want of this admirable symmetry of the Greeks is a thousand times more great and crying than in any Italian. The results of the want show themselves most glaringly, perhaps, in our architecture, but they show themselves, also, in all our art. *Fit details strictly combined, in view of a large general result nobly conceived*; that is just the beautiful *symmetria prisca* of the Greeks, and it is just where we English fail, where all our art fails. Striking ideas we have, and well-executed details we have; but that high symmetry which, with satisfying and delightful effect, combines them, we seldom or never have. The glorious beauty of the Acropolis at Athens did not come from single fine things stuck about on that hill, a statue here, a gateway there;—no, it arose from all things being perfectly combined for a supreme total effect. What must not an Englishman feel about our deficiencies in this respect, as the sense for beauty, whereof this symmetry is an essential element, awakens and strengthens within him! what will not one day be his respect and desire for Greece and its *symmetria prisca*, when the scales drop from his eyes as he walks the London streets, and he sees such a lesson in meanness as the Strand, for instance, in its true deformity! But here we are coming to our friend Mr. Ruskin's province, and I will not intrude upon it, for he is its very sufficient guardian.

And so we at last find, it seems, we find flowing in favor of the humanities the natural

and necessary stream of things, which seemed against them when we started. The "hairy quadruped furnished with a tail and pointed ears, probably arboreal in his habits," this good fellow carried hidden in his nature, apparently, something destined to develop into a necessity for humane letters. Nay, more; we seem finally to be even led to the further conclusion that our hairy ancestor carried in his nature, also, a necessity for Greek.

And therefore, to say the truth, I cannot really think that humane letters are in much actual danger of being thrust out from their leading place in education, in spite of the array of authorities against them at this moment. So long as human nature is what it is, their attractions will remain irresistible. As with Greek, so with letters generally: they will some day come, we may hope, to be studied more rationally, but they will not lose their place. What will happen will rather be that there will be crowded into education other matters besides, far too many; there will be, perhaps, a period of unsettlement and confusion and false tendency; but letters will not in the end lose their leading place. If they lose it for a time, they will get it back again. We shall be brought back to them by our wants and aspirations. And a poor humanist may possess his soul in patience, neither strive nor cry, admit the energy and brilliancy of the partisans of physical science, and their present favor with the public, to be far greater than his own, and still have a happy faith that the nature of things works silently on behalf of the studies which he loves, and that, while we shall all have to acquaint ourselves with the great results reached by modern science, and to give ourselves as much training in its disciplines as we can conveniently carry, yet the majority of men will always require humane letters; and so much the more, as they have the more and the greater results of science to relate to the need in man for conduct, and to the need in him for beauty.



TO A FRIEND<sup>1</sup>

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days,  
 my mind?—  
 He<sup>2</sup> much, the old man, who, clearest-souled  
 of men,  
 Saw The Wide Prospect,<sup>3</sup> and the Asian Fen,  
 And Tmolus hill,<sup>4</sup> and Smyrna bay, though  
 blind.  
 Much he,<sup>5</sup> whose friendship I not long since  
 won, 5  
 That halting slave, who in Nicopolis  
 Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son<sup>6</sup>  
 Cleared Rome of what most shamed him.  
 But be his<sup>7</sup>  
 My special thanks, whose even-balanced soul  
 From first youth tested up to extreme old  
 age, 10  
 Business could not make dull, nor passion  
 wild;  
 Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole;  
 The mellow glory of the Attic stage,  
 Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.<sup>8</sup>

## SHAKESPEARE

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.  
 We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,  
 Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,  
 Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,  
 Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea, 5  
 Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-  
 place,  
 Spares but the cloudy border of his base  
 To the foiled searching of mortality;  
 And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams  
 know,  
 Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honored, self-  
 secure, 10  
 Didst walk on earth unguessed at.—Better so!  
 All pains the immortal spirit must endure,  
 All weakness which impairs, all griefs which  
 bow,  
 Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

<sup>1</sup>Published, as were also the two following sonnets, in 1849.<sup>2</sup>Homer.<sup>3</sup>Europe (Ἐὐρώπη, *the wide prospect*) probably describes the appearance of the European coast to the Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor opposite. The name Asia, again, comes, it has been thought, from the muddy fens of the rivers of Asia Minor such as the Cayster or Mæander, which struck the imagination of the Greeks living near them (Arnold's note).<sup>4</sup>A mountain range near Smyrna, which is one of the cities that claimed to be Homer's birthplace.<sup>5</sup>Epictetus.<sup>6</sup>Domitian, who banished the philosophers from Rome in A.D. 89.<sup>7</sup>Sophocles.<sup>8</sup>He was born at Colonus, which he described in his tragedy *Œdipus at Colonus*.IN HARMONY WITH  
NATURE

## TO A PREACHER

"IN HARMONY with Nature?" Restless fool,  
 Who with such heat dost preach what were  
 to thee,  
 When true, the last impossibility—  
 To be like Nature strong, like Nature cool!  
 Know, man hath all which Nature hath, but  
 more, 5  
 And in that *more* lie all his hopes of good.  
 Nature is cruel, man is sick of blood;  
 Nature is stubborn, man would fain adore;  
 Nature is fickle, man hath need of rest;  
 Nature forgives no debt, and fears no grave; 10  
 Man would be mild, and with safe conscience  
 blest.  
 Man must begin, know this, where Nature  
 ends;  
 Nature and man can never be fast friends.  
 Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave!

REQUIESCAT<sup>9</sup>

STREW on her roses, roses,  
 And never a spray of yew!  
 In quiet she reposes:  
 Ah, would that I did too!  
 Her mirth the world required; 5  
 She bathed it in smiles of glee.  
 But her heart was tired, tired,  
 And now they let her be.  
 Her life was turning, turning,  
 In mazes of heat and sound. 10  
 But for peace her soul was yearning,  
 And now peace laps her round.  
 Her cabined, ample spirit,  
 It fluttered and failed for breath.  
 To-night it doth inherit 15  
 The vasty hall of death.

RESIGNATION<sup>10</sup>

## TO FAUSTA

"To DIE be given us, or attain!  
 Fierce work it were, to do again."  
 So pilgrims, bound for Mecca, prayed  
 At burning noon; so warriors said,  
 Scarfed with the cross, who watched the  
 miles 5  
 Of dust which wreathed their struggling files  
 Down Lydian mountains; so, when snows  
 Round Alpine summits, eddying, rose,

<sup>9</sup>Published in 1853.<sup>10</sup>Published in 1849.

The Goth, bound Rome-wards; so the Hun,  
 Crouched on his saddle, while the sun 10  
 Went lurid down o'er flooded plains  
 Through which the groaning Danube strains  
 To the drear Euxine;—so pray all,  
 Whom labors, self-ordained, enthrall;  
 Because they to themselves propose 15  
 On this side the all-common close  
 A goal which, gained, may give repose.  
 So pray they; and to stand again  
 Where they stood once, to them were pain;  
 Pain to thread back and to renew 20  
 Past straits, and currents long steered through.

But milder natures, and more free—  
 Whom an unblamed serenity  
 Hath freed from passions, and the state  
 Of struggle these necessitate; 25  
 Whom schooling of the stubborn mind  
 Hath made, or birth hath found, resigned—  
 These mourn not, that their goings pay  
 Obedience to the passing day.  
 These claim not every laughing Hour 30  
 For handmaid to their striding power;  
 Each in her turn, with torch upreared,  
 To await their march; and when appeared,  
 Through the cold gloom, with measured race,  
 To usher for a destined space 35  
 (Her own sweet errands all forgone)  
 The too imperious traveler on.  
 These, Fausta, ask not this; nor thou,  
 Time's chafing prisoner, ask it now!

We left, just ten years since, you say, 40  
 That wayside inn we left to-day.<sup>1</sup>  
 Our jovial host, as forth we fare,  
 Shouts greeting from his easy chair.  
 High on a bank our leader stands,  
 Reviews and ranks his motley bands, 45  
 Makes clear our goal to every eye—  
 The valley's western boundary.  
 A gate swings to! our tide hath flowed  
 Already from the silent road.  
 The valley-pastures, one by one, 50  
 Are threaded, quiet in the sun;  
 And now beyond the rude stone bridge  
 Slopes gracious up the western ridge.  
 Its woody border, and the last  
 Of its dark upland farms is past— 55  
 Cool farms, with open-lying stores,  
 Under their burnished sycamores;  
 All past! and through the trees we glide,  
 Emerging on the green hill-side.  
 There climbing hangs, a far-seen sign, 60  
 Our wavering, many-colored line;

There winds, upstreaming slowly still  
 Over the summit of the hill.  
 And now, in front, behold outspread  
 Those upper regions we must tread! 65  
 Mild hollows, and clear heathy swells,  
 The cheerful silence of the fells.  
 Some two hours' march with serious air,  
 Through the deep noontide heats we fare;  
 The red-grouse, springing at our sound, 70  
 Skims, now and then, the shining ground;  
 No life, save his and ours, intrudes  
 Upon these breathless solitudes.  
 O joy! again the farms appear.  
 Cool shade is there, and rustic cheer; 75  
 There springs the brook will guide us down,  
 Bright comrade, to the noisy town.  
 Linger, we follow down; we gain  
 The town, the highway, and the plain  
 And many a mile of dusty way, 80  
 Parched and road-worn, we made that day;  
 But, Fausta, I remember well,  
 That as the balmy darkness fell  
 We bathed our hands with speechless glee,  
 That night, in the wide-glimmering sea. 85

Once more we tread this self-same road,  
 Fausta, which ten years since we trod;  
 Alone we tread it, you and I,  
 Ghosts of that boisterous company.  
 Here, where the brook shines, near its head, 90  
 In its clear, shallow, turf-fringed bed;  
 Here, whence the eye first sees, far down,  
 Capped with faint smoke, the noisy town;  
 Here sit we, and again unroll,  
 Though slowly, the familiar whole. 95  
 The solemn wastes of heathy hill  
 Sleep in the July sunshine still;  
 The self-same shadows now, as then,  
 Play through this grassy upland glen;  
 The loose dark stones on the green way 100  
 Lie strewn, it seems, where then they lay;  
 On this mild bank above the stream,  
 (You crush them!) the blue gentians gleam.  
 Still this wild brook, the rushes cool,  
 The sailing foam, the shining pool! 105  
 These are not changed; and we, you say,  
 Are scarce more changed, in truth, than they.

The gypsies, whom we met below,  
 They, too, have long roamed to and fro;  
 They ramble, leaving, where they pass, 110  
 Their fragments on the cumbered grass.  
 And often to some kindly place  
 Chance guides the migratory race,  
 Where, though long wanderings intervene,  
 They recognize a former scene. 115  
 The dingy tents are pitched; the fires  
 Give to the wind their wavering spires;  
 In dark knots crouch round the wild flame  
 Their children, as when first they came;

<sup>1</sup>Those who have been long familiar with the English Lake Country will find no difficulty in recalling, from the description in the text, the roadside inn at Wythburn on the descent from Dunmail Raise towards Keswick; its sedentary landlord of thirty years ago, and the passage over the Wythburn Fells to Watendlath (Arnold's note).

They see their shackled beasts again 120  
 Move, browsing, up the gray-walled lane.  
 Signs are not wanting, which might raise  
 The ghost in them of former days—  
 Signs are not wanting, if they would;  
 Suggestions to disquietude. 125  
 For them, for all, time's busy touch,  
 While it mends little, troubles much.  
 Their joints grow stiffer—but the year  
 Runs his old round of dubious cheer;  
 Chilly they grow—yet winds in March, 130  
 Still, sharp as ever, freeze and parch;  
 They must live still—and yet, God knows,  
 Crowded and keen the country grows;  
 It seems as if, in their decay,  
 The law grew stronger every day. 135  
 So might they reason, so compare,  
 Fausta, times past with times that are.  
 But no!—they rubbed through yesterday  
 In their hereditary way,  
 And they will rub through, if they can, 140  
 To-morrow on the self-same plan,  
 Till death arrive to supersede,  
 For them, vicissitude and need.

The poet, to whose mighty heart  
 Heaven doth a quicker pulse impart, 145  
 Subdues that energy to scan  
 Not his own course, but that of man.  
 Though he move mountains, though his day  
 Be passed on the proud heights of sway,  
 Though he hath loosed a thousand chains, 150  
 Though he hath borne immortal pains,  
 Action and suffering though he know—  
 He hath not lived, if he lives so.  
 He sees, in some great-historied land,  
 A ruler of the people stand, 155  
 Sees his strong thought in fiery flood  
 Roll through the heaving multitude,  
 Exults—yet for no moment's space  
 Envies the all-regarded place.  
 Beautiful eyes meet his—and he 160  
 Bears to admire uncravingly;  
 They pass—he, mingled with the crowd,  
 Is in their far-off triumphs proud.  
 From some high station he looks down,  
 At sunset, on a populous town; 165  
 Surveys each happy group, which fleets,  
 Toil ended, through the shining streets,  
 Each with some errand of its own—  
 And does not say, "I am alone."  
 He sees the gentle stir of birth 170  
 When morning purifies the earth;  
 He leans upon a gate and sees  
 The pastures, and the quiet trees.  
 Low woody hill, with gracious bound,  
 Folds the still valley almost round;  
 The cuckoo, loud on some high lawn,  
 Is answered from the depth of dawn;  
 In the hedge straggling to the stream,

Pale, dew-drenched, half-shut roses gleam;  
 But, where the farther side slopes down, 180  
 He sees the drowsy new-waked clown  
 In his white quaint-embroidered frock  
 Make, whistling, towards his mist-wreathed  
 flock—  
 Slowly, behind the heavy tread,  
 The wet, flowered grass heaves up its head. 185  
 Leaned on his gate, he gazes—tears  
 Are in his eyes, and in his ears  
 The murmur of a thousand years.  
 Before him he sees life unroll,  
 A placid and continuous whole— 190  
 That general life, which does not cease,  
 Whose secret is not joy, but peace;  
 That life, whose dumb wish is not missed  
 If birth proceeds, if things subsist;  
 The life of plants, and stones, and rain, 195  
 The life he craves—if not in vain  
 Fate gave, what chance shall not control,  
 His sad lucidity of soul.

You listen—but that wandering smile,  
 Fausta, betrays you cold the while! 200  
 Your eyes pursue the bells of foam  
 Washed, eddying, from this bank, their home.  
 "Those gypsies," so your thoughts I scan,  
 "Are less, the poet more, than man.  
 They feel not, though they move and see; 205  
 Deeply the poet feels; but he  
 Breathes, when he will, immortal air,  
 Where Orpheus and where Homer are.  
 In the day's life, whose iron round  
 Hems us all in, he is not bound; 210  
 He leaves his kind, o'erleaps their pen,  
 And flees the common life of men.  
 He escapes thence, but we abide—  
 Not deep the poet sees, but wide."

The world in which we live and move 215  
 Outlasts aversion, outlasts love,  
 Outlasts each effort, interest, hope,  
 Remorse, grief, joy;—and were the scope  
 Of these affections wider made,  
 Man still would see, and see dismayed, 220  
 Beyond his passion's widest range,  
 Far regions of eternal change.  
 Nay, and since death, which wipes out man,  
 Finds him with many an unsolved plan,  
 With much unknown, and much untried, 225  
 Wonder not dead, and thirst not dried,  
 Still gazing on the ever full  
 Eternal mundane spectacle—  
 This world in which we draw our breath,  
 In some sense, Fausta, outlasts death. 230

Blame thou not, therefore, him who dares  
 Judge vain beforehand human cares;  
 Whose natural insight can discern  
 What through experience others learn;



Who needs not love and power, to know 235  
 Love transient, power an unreal show;  
 Who treads at ease life's uncheered ways—  
 Him blame not, Fausta, rather praise!  
 Rather thyself for some aim pray  
 Nobler than this, to fill the day; 240  
 Rather that heart, which burns in thee,  
 Ask, not to amuse, but to set free;  
 Be passionate hopes not ill resigned  
 For quiet, and a fearless mind.  
 And though fate grudge to thee and me 245  
 The poet's rapt security,  
 Yet they, believe me, who await  
 No gifts from chance, have conquered fate;  
 They, winning room to see and hear,  
 And to men's business not too near, 250  
 Through clouds of individual strife  
 Draw homeward to the general life.  
 Like leaves by suns not yet uncurled;  
 To the wise, foolish; to the world,  
 Weak;—yet not weak, I might reply, 255  
 Not foolish, Fausta, in His eye,  
 To whom each moment in its race,  
 Crowd as we will its neutral space,  
 Is but a quiet watershed  
 Whence, equally, the seas of life and death 260  
 are fed.

Enough, we live!—and if a life,  
 With large results so little rife,  
 Though bearable, seem hardly worth  
 This pomp of worlds, this pain of birth;  
 Yet, Fausta, the mute turf we tread, 265  
 The solemn hills around us spread,  
 This stream which falls incessantly,  
 The strange-sprawled rocks, the lonely sky,  
 If I might lend their life a voice,  
 Seem to bear rather than rejoice. 270  
 And even could the intemperate prayer  
 Man iterates, while these forbear,  
 For movement, for an ampler sphere,  
 Pierce Fate's impenetrable ear;  
 Not milder is the general lot 275  
 Because our spirits have forgot,  
 In action's dizzying eddy whirled,  
 The something that infects the world.

### THE FORSAKEN MERMAN<sup>1</sup>

COME, dear children, let us away;  
 Down and away below!  
 Now my brothers call from the bay,  
 Now the great winds shoreward blow,  
 Now the salt tides seaward flow;  
 Now the wild white horses play,  
 Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.

Children dear, let us away!  
 This way, this way!

Call her once before you go— 10  
 Call once yet!  
 In a voice that she will know:  
 "Margaret! Margaret!"  
 Children's voices should be dear  
 (Call once more) to a mother's ear; 15  
 Children's voices, wild with pain—  
 Surely she will come again!  
 Call her once and come away;  
 This way, this way!  
 "Mother dear, we cannot stay!" 20  
 The wild white horses foam and fret."  
 Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;  
 Call no more!  
 One last look at the white-walled town, 25  
 And the little gray church on the windy shore;  
 Then come down!  
 She will not come though you call all day;  
 Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday 30  
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay?  
 In the caverns where we lay,  
 Through the surf and through the swell,  
 The far-off sound of a silver bell?  
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep, 35  
 Where the winds are all asleep;  
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,  
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream,  
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,  
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground; 40  
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,  
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine;  
 Where great whales come sailing by,  
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,  
 Round the world for ever and aye? 45  
 When did music come this way?  
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 (Call yet once) that she went away?  
 Once she sat with you and me, 50  
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,  
 And the youngest sat on her knee.  
 She combed its bright hair, and she tended it  
 well,  
 When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.  
 She sighed, she looked up through the clear  
 green sea; 55  
 She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray  
 In the little gray church on the shore to-day.  
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!  
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with  
 thee."

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1849

I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the  
waves; 60  
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind  
sea-caves!"

She smiled, she went up through the surf in  
the bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone? 64  
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;  
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;  
Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf  
in the bay.

We went up the beach, by the sandy down  
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-  
walled town;

Through the narrow paved streets, where all  
was still, 70

To the little gray church on the windy hill.  
From the church came a murmur of folk at  
their prayers,

But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.  
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn  
with rains,

And we gazed up the aisle through the small  
leaded panes. 75

She sat by the pillar; we saw her clear:  
"Margaret, hie! come quick, we are here!  
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;  
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."  
But, ah, she gave me never a look, 80

For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!  
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.  
Come away, children, call no more!  
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down! 85  
Down to the depths of the sea!

She sits at her wheel in the humming town,  
Singing most joyfully.

Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,  
For the humming street, and the child with  
its toy! 90

For the priest, and the bell, and the holy  
well;

For the wheel where I spun,  
And the blessed light of the sun!"

And so she sings her fill,  
Singing most joyfully, 95

Till the spindle falls from her hand,  
And the whizzing wheel stands still.

She steals to the window, and looks at the  
sand,

And over the sand at the sea;  
And her eyes are set in a stare; 100

And anon there breaks a sigh,  
And anon there drops a tear,

From a sorrow-clouded eye,  
And a heart sorrow-laden,

A long, long sigh; 105

For the cold strange eyes of a little Mer-  
maid  
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children;  
Come children, come down!  
The hoarse wind blows coldly; 110  
Lights shine in the town.

She will start from her slumber  
When gusts shake the door;  
She will hear the winds howling,  
Will hear the waves roar. 115

We shall see, while above us  
The waves roar and whirl,  
A ceiling of amber,  
A pavement of pearl.

Singing: "Here came a mortal, 120  
But faithless was she!  
And alone dwell for ever  
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,  
When soft the winds blow, 125  
When clear falls the moonlight,  
When spring-tides are low;

When sweet airs come seaward  
From heaths starred with broom,  
And high rocks throw mildly 130  
On the blanched sands a gloom;

Up the still, glistening beaches,  
Up the creeks we will hie,  
Over banks of bright seaweed  
The ebb-tide leaves dry. 135

We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
At the white, sleeping town;  
At the church on the hill-side—  
And then come back down.

Singing: "There dwells a loved one, 140  
But cruel is she!  
She left lonely for ever  
The kings of the sea."

## SWITZERLAND<sup>1</sup>

### I. MEETING

AGAIN I see my bliss at hand,  
The town, the lake are here;  
My Marguerite smiles upon the strand,  
Unaltered with the year.

I know that graceful figure fair, 5  
That cheek of languid hue;  
I know that soft, enkerchiefed hair,  
And those sweet eyes of blue.

<sup>1</sup>The general title was given to this group of poems in 1853, though some of them were published in 1852. The third poem was published in 1869, the fourth in 1857, and the seventh in 1867, though it was not made a member of this group until 1869. A final change in arrangement brought the group to its present form in 1885.

Again I spring to make my choice;  
 Again in tones of ire 10  
 I hear a God's tremendous voice:  
 "Be counseled, and retire."

Ye guiding Powers who join and part,  
 What would ye have with me?  
 Ah, warn some more ambitious heart, 15  
 And let the peaceful be!

## 2. PARTING

YE storm-winds of Autumn!  
 Who rush by, who shake  
 The window, and ruffle  
 The gleam-lighted lake;  
 Who cross to the hill-side 5  
 Thin-sprinkled with farms,  
 Where the high woods strip sadly  
 Their yellowing arms—  
 Ye are bound for the mountains!  
 Ah! with you let me go 10  
 Where your cold, distant barrier,  
 The vast range of snow,  
 Through the loose clouds lifts dimly  
 Its white peaks in air—  
 How deep is their stillness! 15  
 Ah, would I were there!

But on the stairs what voice is this I hear,  
 Buoyant as morning, and as morning clear?  
 Say, has some wet bird-haunted English lawn  
 Lent it the music of its trees at dawn? 20  
 Or was it from some sun-flecked mountain-  
 brook

That the sweet voice its upland clearness took?  
 Ah! it comes nearer—  
 Sweet notes, this way!

Hark! fast by the window 25  
 The rushing winds go,  
 To the ice-cumbered gorges,  
 The vast seas of snow!  
 There the torrents drive upward  
 Their rock-strangled hum; 30  
 There the avalanche thunders  
 The hoarse torrent dumb.  
 — I come, O ye mountains!  
 Ye torrents, I come!

But who is this, by the half-opened door, 35  
 Whose figure casts a shadow on the floor?  
 The sweet blue eyes—the soft, ash-colored  
 hair—

The cheeks that still their gentle paleness  
 wear—

The lovely lips, with their arch smile that tells  
 The unconquered joy in which her spirit  
 dwells— 40

Ah! they bend nearer—  
 Sweet lips, this way!

Hark! The wind rushes past us!  
 Ah! with that let me go  
 To the clear, waning hill-side, 45  
 Unspotted by snow,  
 There to watch, o'er the sunk vale,  
 The frore mountain-wall,  
 Where the niched snow-bed sprays down  
 Its powdery fall. 50  
 There its dusky blue clusters  
 The aconite spreads;  
 There the pines slope, the cloud-strips  
 Hung soft in their heads.  
 No life but, at moments, 55  
 The mountain-bee's hum.  
 —I come, O ye mountains!  
 Ye pine-woods, I come!

Forgive me! forgive me!  
 Ah, Marguerite, fain 60  
 Would these arms reach to clasp thee!  
 But see! 'tis in vain.

In the void air, towards thee,  
 My stretched arms are cast;  
 But a sea rolls between us— 65  
 Our different past!

To the lips, ah! of others  
 Those lips have been pressed,  
 And others, ere I was,  
 Were strained to that breast; 70

Far, far from each other  
 Our spirits have grown;  
 And what heart knows another?  
 Ah! who knows his own?

Blow, ye winds! lift me with you! 75  
 I come to the wild.  
 Fold closely, O Nature!  
 Thine arms round thy child.

To thee only God granted  
 A heart ever new— 80  
 To all always open,  
 To all always true.

Ah! calm me, restore me;  
 And dry up my tears  
 On thy high mountain-platforms, 85  
 Where morn first appears;

Where the white mists, for ever,  
 Are spread and upfurled—  
 In the stir of the forces  
 Whence issued the world. 90

## 3. A FAREWELL

MY HORSE'S feet beside the lake,  
 Where sweet the unbroken moonbeams lay,  
 Sent echoes through the night to wake  
 Each glistening strand, each heath-fringed bay.



The poplar avenue was passed, 5  
And the roofed bridge that spans the stream;  
Up the steep street I hurried fast,  
Led by thy taper's starlike beam.

I came! I saw thee rise!—the blood 10  
Poured flushing to thy languid cheek.  
Locked in each other's arms we stood,  
In tears, with hearts too full to speak.

Days flew;—ah, soon I could discern  
A trouble in thine altered air!  
Thy hand lay languidly in mine, 15  
Thy cheek was grave, thy speech grew rare.

I blame thee not!—this heart, I know,  
To be long loved was never framed;  
For something in its depths doth glow  
Too strange, too restless, too untamed. 20

And women—things that live and move  
Mined by the fever of the soul—  
They seek to find in those they love  
Stern strength, and promise of control.

They ask not kindness, gentle ways— 25  
These they themselves have tried and known;  
They ask a soul which never sways  
With the blind gusts that shake their own.

I too have felt the load I bore  
In a too strong emotion's sway; 30  
I too have wished, no woman more,  
This starting, feverish heart away.

I too have longed for trenchant force,  
And will like a dividing spear;  
Have praised the keen, unscrupulous course, 35  
Which knows no doubt, which feels no fear.

But in the world I learned, what there  
Thou too wilt surely one day prove,  
That will, that energy, though rare,  
Are yet far, far less rare than love. 40

Go, then!—till time and fate impress  
This truth on thee, be mine no more!  
They will!—for thou, I feel, not less  
Than I, wast destined to this lore.

We school our manners, act our parts— 45  
But He, who sees us through and through,  
Knows that the bent of both our hearts  
Was to be gentle, tranquil, true.

And though we wear out life, alas!  
Distracted as a homeless wind, 50  
In beating where we must not pass,  
In seeking what we shall not find;

Yet we shall one day gain, life past,  
Clear prospect o'er our being's whole;  
Shall see ourselves, and learn at last 55  
Our true affinities of soul.

We shall not then deny a course  
To every thought the mass ignore;  
We shall not then call hardness force,  
Nor lightness wisdom any more. 60

Then, in the eternal Father's smile,  
Our soothed, encouraged souls will dare  
To seem as free from pride and guile,  
As good, as generous, as they are.

Then we shall know our friends!—though  
much 65  
Will have been lost—the help in strife,  
The thousand sweet, still joys of such  
As hand in hand face earthly life—

Though these be lost, there will be yet  
A sympathy august and pure; 70  
Ennobled by a vast regret,  
And by contrition sealed thrice sure.

And we, whose ways were unlike here,  
May then more neighboring courses ply;  
May to each other be brought near, 75  
And greet across infinity.

How sweet, unreached by earthly jars,  
My sister! to maintain with thee  
The hush among the shining stars,  
The calm upon the moonlit sea! 80

How sweet to feel, on the boon air,  
All our unquiet pulses cease!  
To feel that nothing can impair  
The gentleness, the thirst for peace—

The gentleness too rudely hurled 85  
On this wild earth of hate and fear;  
The thirst for peace a raving world  
Would never let us satiate here.

#### 4. ISOLATION. TO MARGUERITE

WE WERE apart; yet, day by day,  
I bade my heart more constant be.  
I bade it keep the world away,  
And grow a home for only thee;  
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew, 5  
Like mine, each day, more tried, more true.

The fault was grave! I might have known  
What far too soon, alas! I learned—  
The heart can bind itself alone,  
And faith may oft be unreturned. 10  
Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell—  
Thou lov'st no more;—Farewell! Farewell!

Farewell!—and thou, thou lonely heart,  
Which never yet without remorse  
Even for a moment didst depart 15  
From thy remote and sphered course  
To haunt the place where passions reign—  
Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame  
Which Luna<sup>1</sup> felt, that summer night, 20  
Flash through her pure immortal frame,  
When she forsook the starry height  
To hang over Endymion's sleep  
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved 25  
How vain a thing is mortal love,  
Wandering in Heaven, far removed.  
But thou hast long had place to prove  
This truth—to prove, and make thine own:  
“Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone.” 30

Or, if not quite alone, yet they  
Which touch thee are unmating things—  
Ocean and clouds and night and day;  
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;  
And life, and others' joy and pain, 35  
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men—for they, at least,  
Have *dreamed* two human hearts might blend  
In one, and were through faith released  
From isolation without end 40  
Prolonged; nor knew, although not less  
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

### 5. TO MARGUERITE—CONTINUED

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,  
With echoing straits between us thrown,  
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,  
We mortal millions live *alone*.  
The islands feel the encclasping flow, 5  
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,  
And they are swept by balms of spring,  
And in their glens, on starry nights,  
The nightingales divinely sing; 10  
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,  
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh! then a longing like despair  
Is to their farthest caverns sent;  
For surely once, they feel, we were 15  
Parts of a single continent!  
Now round us spreads the watery plain—  
Oh might our marges meet again!

Who ordered, that their longing's fire  
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled? 20

<sup>1</sup>Artemis.

Who renders vain their deep desire?—  
A God, a God their severance ruled!  
And bade betwixt their shores to be  
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

### 6. ABSENCE

IN THIS fair stranger's eyes of gray  
Thine eyes, my love! I see.  
I shiver; for the passing day  
Had borne me far from thee.

This is the curse of life! that not 5  
A nobler, calmer train  
Of wiser thoughts and feelings blot  
Our passions from our brain;

But each day brings its petty dust  
Our soon-choked souls to fill, 10  
And we forget because we must  
And not because we will.

I struggle towards the light; and ye,  
Once-longed-for storms of love!  
If with the light ye cannot be. 15  
I bear that ye remove.

I struggle towards the light—but oh,  
While yet the night is chill,  
Upon time's barren, stormy flow,  
Stay with me, Marguerite, still! 20

### 7. THE TERRACE AT BERNE

(COMPOSED TEN YEARS AFTER THE  
PRECEDING)

TEN years!—and to my waking eye  
Once more the roofs of Berne appear;  
The rocky banks, the terrace high,  
The stream!—and do I linger here?

The clouds are on the Oberland, 5  
The Jungfrau snows look faint and far;  
But bright are those green fields at hand,  
And through those fields comes down the Aar,

And from the blue twin-lakes it comes,  
Flows by the town, the churchyard fair; 10  
And 'neath the garden-walk it hums,  
The house!—and is my Marguerite there?

Ah, shall I see thee, while a flush  
Of startled pleasure floods thy brow,  
Quick through the oleanders brush, 15  
And clap thy hands, and cry: “’Tis thou!”

Or hast thou long since wandered back,  
Daughter of France! to France, thy home;  
And flitted down the flowery track  
Where feet like thine too lightly come? 20

Doth riotous laughter now replace  
Thy smile; and rouge, with stony glare,  
Thy cheeks' soft hue; and fluttering lace  
The kerchief that enwound thy hair?

Or is it over?—art thou dead?—  
Dead!—and no warning shiver ran  
Across my heart, to say thy thread  
Of life was cut, and closed thy span!

Could from earth's ways that figure slight  
Be lost, and I not feel 'twas so?  
Of that fresh voice the gay delight  
Fail from earth's air, and I not know?

Or shall I find thee still, but changed,  
But not the Marguerite of thy prime?  
With all thy being re-arranged,  
Passed through the crucible of time;

With spirit vanished, beauty waned,  
And hardly yet a glance, a tone,  
A gesture—anything—retained  
Of all that was my Marguerite's own?

I will not know! For wherefore try,  
To things by mortal course that live,  
A shadowy durability,  
For which they were not meant, to give?

Like driftwood spars, which meet and pass  
Upon the boundless ocean-plain,  
So on the sea of life, alas!  
Man meets man—meets, and quits again.

I knew it when my life was young;  
I feel it still, now youth is o'er.  
—The mists are on the mountain hung,  
And Marguerite I shall see no more.

### PHILOMELA<sup>1</sup>

HARK! ah, the nightingale—  
The tawny-throated!  
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!  
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,  
Still, after many years, in distant lands,  
Still nourishing in thy bewildered brain  
That wild, unquenched, deep-sunken, old-  
world pain—

<sup>1</sup>Philomela was violated by her brother-in-law, Tereus, King of Daulis, who thereafter cut out her tongue so that she might not betray the deed. She, however, made it known to her sister Procne, Tereus's wife, by weaving words into a robe ("the too clear web"). Procne killed her son, gave his body as food to his father, and fled with Philomela. When Tereus pursued them, and they prayed for deliverance, the gods changed them into birds—Philomela into a nightingale. In the poem (published in 1853), Arnold reverses the positions of Philomela and Procne.

Say, will it never heal?  
And can this fragrant lawn  
With its cool trees, and night,  
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,  
And moonshine, and the dew,  
To thy racked heart and brain  
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold  
Here, through the moonlight on this English  
grass,  
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?  
Dost thou again peruse  
With hot cheeks and seared eyes  
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's  
shame?  
Dost thou once more assay  
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,  
Poor fugitive, the feathery change  
Once more, and once more seem to make re-  
sound  
With love and hate, triumph and agony,  
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?  
Listen, Eugenia—  
How thick the bursts come crowding through  
the leaves!  
Again—thou hearest?  
Eternal Passion!  
Eternal Pain!

### DOVER BEACH<sup>2</sup>

THE sea is calm to-night.  
The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the  
light  
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England  
stand,  
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil  
bay.  
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!  
Only, from the long line of spray  
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,  
Listen! you hear the grating roar  
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and  
fling,  
At their return, up the high strand,  
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago  
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought  
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
Of human misery; we  
Find also in the sound a thought,  
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1867.



The Sea of Faith  
 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's  
 shore  
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.  
 But now I only hear  
 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar, 25  
 Retreating, to the breath  
 Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear  
 And naked shingles<sup>1</sup> of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true  
 To one another! for the world, which seems 30  
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
 So various, so beautiful, so new,  
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
 And we are here as on a darkling plain 35  
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and  
 flight,  
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.

### SELF-DEPENDENCE<sup>2</sup>

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking  
 What I am, and what I ought to be,  
 At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me  
 Forwards, forwards, o'er the star-lit sea.

And a look of passionate desire 5  
 O'er the sea and to the stars I send:  
 "Ye who from my childhood up have calmed  
 me,  
 Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,  
 On my heart your mighty charm renew; 10  
 Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,  
 Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of  
 heaven,  
 Over the lit sea's unquiet way,  
 In the rustling night-air came the answer: 15  
 "Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,  
 Undistracted by the sights they see,  
 These demand not that the things without  
 them  
 Yield them love, amusement, sympathy. 20

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,  
 And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;  
 For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting  
 All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful 25  
 In what state God's other works may be,  
 In their own tasks all their powers pouring,  
 These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,  
 A cry like thine in my own heart I hear: 30  
 "Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,  
 Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

### MORALITY<sup>3</sup>

WE CANNOT kindle when we will  
 The fire which in the heart resides;  
 The spirit bloweth and is still,  
 In mystery our soul abides.  
 But tasks in hours of insight willed 5  
 Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

With aching hands and bleeding feet  
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;  
 We bear the burden and the heat  
 Of the long day, and wish 'twere done. 10  
 Not till the hours of light return,  
 All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,  
 When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,  
 Ask, how *she* viewed thy self-control, 15  
 Thy struggling, tasked morality—  
 Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,  
 Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,  
 Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek, 20  
 See, on her face a glow is spread,  
 A strong emotion on her cheek!  
 "Ah, child!" she cries, "that strife divine,  
 Whence was it, for it is not mine?"

"There is no effort on *my* brow— 25  
 I do not strive, I do not weep;  
 I rush with the swift spheres and glow  
 In joy, and when I will, I sleep.  
 Yet that severe, that earnest air,  
 I saw, I felt it once—but where? 30

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,  
 Nor wore the manacles of space;  
 I felt it in some other clime,  
 I saw it in some other place.  
 'Twas when the heavenly house I trod, 35  
 And lay upon the breast of God."

### THE BURIED LIFE<sup>4</sup>

LIGHT flows our war of mocking words, and  
 yet,  
 Behold, with tears mine eyes are wet!  
 I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.  
 Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,  
 We know, we know that we can smile! 5  
 But there's a something in this breast,  
 To which thy light words bring no rest,

<sup>1</sup>Pebbly shores.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1852.

<sup>3</sup>Published in 1852.

<sup>4</sup>Published in 1862.

And thy gay smiles an anodyne.  
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,  
And turn those limpid eyes on mine, 10  
And let me read there, love! thy inmost soul.

Alas! is even love too weak  
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?  
Are even lovers powerless to reveal  
To one another what indeed they feel? 15  
I knew the mass of men concealed  
Their thoughts, for fear that if revealed  
They would by other men be met  
With blank indifference, or with blame re-  
proved;  
I knew they lived and moved 20  
Tricked in disguises, alien to the rest  
Of men, and alien to themselves—and yet  
The same heart beats in every human breast!

But we, my love!—doth a like spell benumb  
Our hearts, our voices?—must we too be  
dumb? 25

Ah! well for us, if even we,  
Even for a moment, can get free  
Our heart, and have our lips unchained;  
For that which seals them hath been deep-  
ordained!

Fate, which foresaw 30  
How frivolous a baby man would be—  
By what distractions he would be possessed,  
How he would pour himself in every strife,  
And well-nigh change his own identity—  
That it might keep from his capricious play 35  
His genuine self, and force him to obey  
Even in his own despite his being's law,  
Bade through the deep recesses of our breast  
The unregarded river of our life  
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way; 40  
And that we should not see  
The buried stream, and seem to be  
Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,  
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded  
streets, 45  
But often, in the din of strife,  
There rises an unspeakable desire  
After the knowledge of our buried life;  
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force  
In tracking out our true, original course; 50  
A longing to inquire  
Into the mystery of this heart which beats  
So wild, so deep in us—to know  
Whence our lives come and where they go.  
And many a man in his own breast then  
delves, 55  
But deep enough, alas! none ever mines.  
And we have been on many thousand lines,

And we have shown, on each, spirit and power;  
But hardly have we, for one little hour,  
Been on our own line, have we been our-  
selves— 60

Hardly had skill to utter one of all  
The nameless feelings that course through our  
breast,  
But they course on for ever unexpressed.  
And long we try in vain to speak and act  
Our hidden self, and what we say and do 65  
Is eloquent, is well—but 'tis not true!  
And then we will no more be racked  
With inward striving, and demand  
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour  
Their stupefying power; 70  
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call!  
Yet still, from time to time, vague and for-  
lorn,

From the soul's subterranean depth upborne  
As from an infinitely distant land,  
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey 75  
A melancholy into all our day.

Only—but this is rare—  
When a beloved hand is laid in ours,  
When, jaded with the rush and glare  
Of the interminable hours, 80  
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,  
When our world-deafened ear  
Is by the tones of a loved voice caressed—  
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,  
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again. 85  
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,  
And what we mean, we say, and what we  
would, we know.  
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,  
And hears its winding murmur; and he sees  
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the  
breeze. 90

And there arrives a lull in the hot race  
Wherein he doth for ever chase  
That flying and elusive shadow, rest.  
An air of coolness plays upon his face,  
And an unwonted calm pervades his breast. 95  
And then he thinks he knows  
The hills where his life rose,  
And the sea where it goes.

## THE FUTURE<sup>1</sup>

A WANDERER is man from his birth.  
He was born in a ship  
On the breast of the river of Time;  
Brimming with wonder and joy  
He spreads out his arms to the light, 5  
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1852.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.  
 Whether he wakes,  
 Where the snowy mountainous pass,  
 Echoing the screams of the eagles, 10  
 Hems in its gorges the bed  
 Of the new-born clear-flowing stream;  
 Whether he first sees light  
 Where the river in gleaming rings  
 Sluggishly winds through the plain; 15  
 Whether in sound of the swallowing sea—  
 As is the world on the banks,  
 So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,  
 Fable and dream 20  
 Of the lands which the river of Time  
 Had left ere he woke on its breast,  
 Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.  
 Only the tract where he sails  
 He wots of; only the thoughts, 25  
 Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more  
 As she was by the sources of Time?  
 Who imagines her fields as they lay  
 In the sunshine, unworn by the plow? 30  
 Who thinks as they thought,  
 The tribes who then roamed on her breast,  
 Her vigorous, primitive sons?

What girl  
 Now reads in her bosom as clear 35  
 As Rebekah read, when she sat  
 At eve by the palm-shaded well?<sup>1</sup>  
 Who guards in her breast  
 As deep, as pellucid a spring  
 Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure? 40

What bard,  
 At the height of his vision, can deem  
 Of God, of the world, of the soul,  
 With a plainness as near,  
 As flashing as Moses felt 45  
 When he lay in the night by his flock  
 On the starlit Arabian waste?<sup>2</sup>  
 Can rise and obey  
 The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time  
 Now flows through with us, is the plain. 50  
 Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.  
 Bordered by cities and hoarse  
 With a thousand cries is its stream.  
 And we on its breast, our minds 55  
 Are confused as the cries which we hear,  
 Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled  
 For ever the course of the river of Time.

That cities will crowd to its edge 60  
 In a blacker, incessanter line;  
 That the din will be more on its banks,  
 Denser the trade on its stream,  
 Flatter the plain where it flows,  
 Fiercer the sun overhead. 65  
 That never will those on its breast  
 See an ennobling sight,  
 Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,  
 And we know not what shall succeed. 70

Haply, the river of Time—  
 As it grows, as the towns on its marge  
 Fling their wavering lights  
 On a wider, statelier stream—  
 May acquire, if not the calm 75  
 Of its early mountainous shore,  
 Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush  
 Of the gray expanse where he floats, 79  
 Freshening its current and spotted with foam  
 As it draws to the Ocean, may strike  
 Peace to the soul of the man on its breast—  
 As the pale waste widens around him,  
 As the banks fade dimmer away,  
 As the stars come out, and the night-wind 85  
 Brings up the stream  
 Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

### THE SCHOLAR-GYPSY<sup>3</sup>

Go, FOR they call you, shepherd, from the hill;  
 Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!<sup>4</sup>  
 No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,  
 Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their  
 throats,  
 Nor the cropped herbage shoot another  
 head. 5  
 But when the fields are still,

<sup>3</sup>"There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there; and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gypsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtlety of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gypsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with were not such impostors as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others; that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned."—*Glanvil, Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661 (Arnold's note). The poem was published in 1853.

<sup>4</sup>Sheep-folds.

<sup>1</sup>See *Genesis*, xxiv.

<sup>2</sup>See *Exodus*, iii.



And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,  
And only the white sheep are sometimes  
seen

Cross and recross the strips of moon-  
blanched green, 9  
Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of late—  
In this high field's dark corner, where he  
leaves

His coat, his basket, and his earthen  
cruse,

And in the sun all morning binds the  
sheaves,

Then here, at noon, comes back his stores  
to use— 15

Here will I sit and wait,  
While to my ear from uplands far away  
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,  
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—  
All the live murmur of a summer's day. 20

Screened is this nook o'er the high, half-  
reaped field,

And here till sun-down, shepherd! will I be.  
Through the thick corn the scarlet pop-  
pies peep,

And round green roots and yellowing stalks  
I see

Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils creep; 25

And air-swept lindens yield

Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed  
showers

Of bloom on the bent grass where I am  
laid,

And bower me from the August sun with  
shade;

And the eye travels down to Oxford's  
towers. 30

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—  
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again!

The story of the Oxford scholar poor,  
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive  
brain,

Who, tired of knocking at preferment's<sup>1</sup>  
door, 35

One summer morn forsook

His friends, and went to learn the gypsy-  
lore,

And roamed the world with that wild  
brotherhood,

And came, as most men deemed, to little  
good,

But came to Oxford and his friends no  
more. 40

But once, years after, in the country lanes,  
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,

Met him, and of his way of life inquired;  
Whereat he answered, that the gypsy-crew,  
His mates, had arts to rule as they de-  
sired 45

The workings of men's brains,  
And they can bind them to what thoughts  
they will.

"And I," he said, "the secret of their  
art,

When fully learned, will to the world im-  
part;

But it needs heaven-sent moments for this  
skill." 50

This said, he left them, and returned no  
more.—

But rumors hung about the country-side,  
That the lost Scholar long was seen to  
stray,

Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-  
tied,

In hat of antique shape, and cloak of  
gray, 55

The same the gypsies wore.

Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in  
spring;

At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire  
moors,

On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-  
frocked boors

Had found him seated at their entering, 60

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would  
fly.

And I myself seem half to know thy looks,  
'And put the shepherds, wanderer! on thy  
trace;

And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the  
rooks

I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;  
Or in my boat I lie 66

Moored to the cool bank in the summer  
heats,

'Mid wide grass meadows which the sun-  
shine fills,

And watch the warm, green-muffled  
Cumnor hills,

And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy re-  
treats. 70

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground!  
Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,

Returning home on summer nights, have  
met

Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-  
hithe,

Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers  
wet, 75

As the punt's rope chops round;

<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, of trying to secure a post in the Church.

And leaning backward in a pensive dream,  
 And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers  
 Plucked in shy fields and distant Wych-  
 wood<sup>1</sup> bowers,  
 And thine eyes resting on the moonlit  
 stream. 80

And then they land, and thou art seen no  
 more!—

Maidens, who from the distant hamlets  
 come

To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,  
 Oft through the darkening fields have seen  
 thee roam,

Or cross a stile into the public way. 85

Oft thou hast given them store

Of flowers—the frail-leafed, white anemone,  
 Dark bluebells drenched with dew of  
 summer eves,

And purple orchises with spotted leaves—  
 But none hath words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's  
 here 91

In June, and many a scythe in sunshine  
 flames,

Men who through those wide fields of  
 breezy grass

Where black-winged swallows haunt the  
 glittering Thames,

To bathe in the abandoned lasher<sup>2</sup> pass, 95

Have often passed thee near

Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;  
 Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure  
 spare,

Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted  
 air—

But, when they came from bathing, thou  
 wast gone! 100

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,  
 Where at her open door the housewife darns,

Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate

To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.

Children, who early range these slopes  
 and late 105

For cresses from the rills,

Have known thee eying, all an April-day,  
 The springing pastures and the feeding  
 kine;

And marked thee, when the stars come  
 out and shine,

Through the long dewy grass move slow  
 away. 110

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley wood—

Where most the gypsies by the turf-edged  
 way

Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush  
 you see

With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of  
 gray,

Above the forest ground called Thes-  
 saly— 115

The blackbird, picking food,  
 Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at  
 all;

So often has he known thee past him  
 stray,

Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered  
 spray,

And waiting for the spark from heaven to  
 fall. 120

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill  
 Where home through flooded fields foot-  
 travelers go,

Have I not passed thee on the wooden  
 bridge,

Wrapped in thy cloak and battling with the  
 snow,

Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its wintry  
 ridge? 125

And thou hast climbed the hill  
 And gained the white brow of the Cumner  
 range;

Turned once to watch, while thick the  
 snowflakes fall,

The line of festal light in Christ-Church  
 hall<sup>3</sup>—

Then sought thy straw in some sequestered  
 grange. 130

But what—I dream! Two hundred years are  
 flown

Since first thy story ran through Oxford  
 halls,

And the grave Glanvil did the tale in-  
 scribe

That thou wert wandered from the studious  
 walls

To learn strange arts, and join a gypsy-  
 tribe; 135

And thou from earth art gone  
 Long since, and in some quiet churchyard  
 laid—

Some country-nook, where o'er thy un-  
 known grave

Tall grasses and white flowering nettles  
 wave, 139

Under a dark, red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!  
 For what wears out the life of mortal men?

'Tis that from change to change their  
 being rolls;

'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,

<sup>1</sup>A forest about ten miles from Oxford.

<sup>2</sup>The pool below a dam.

<sup>3</sup>The hall of Christ Church College, Oxford.

Exhaust the energy of strongest souls 145  
And numb the elastic powers.

Till having used our nerves with bliss and  
teen,<sup>1</sup>

And tired upon a thousand schemes our  
wit,

To the just-pausing Genius we remit  
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have  
been. 150

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou per-  
ish, so?

Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire;  
Else wert thou long since numbered with  
the dead!

Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy  
fire!

The generations of thy peers are fled, 155  
And we ourselves shall go;

But thou possessest an immortal lot,  
And we imagine thee exempt from age  
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's  
page,

Because thou hadst—what we, alas! have  
not. 160

For early didst thou leave the world, with  
powers

Fresh, undiverted to the world without,  
Firm to their mark, not spent on other  
things;

Free from the sick fatigue, the languid  
doubt,

Which much to have tried, in much been  
baffled, brings. 165

O life unlike to ours!

Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,  
Of whom each strives, nor knows for  
what he strives,

And each half lives a hundred different  
lives;

Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in  
hope. 170

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and  
we,

Light half-believers of our casual creeds,  
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,  
Whose insight never has borne fruit in  
deeds,

Whose vague resolves never have been  
fulfilled; 175

For whom each year we see

Breeds new beginnings, disappointments  
new;

Who hesitate and falter life away,  
And lose to-morrow the ground won  
to-day—

Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too? 180

Yes, we await it!—but it still delays,  
And then we suffer! and amongst us one,<sup>2</sup>  
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly  
His seat upon the intellectual throne;

And all his store of sad experience he 185  
Lays bare of wretched days;

Tells us his misery's birth and growth and  
signs,

And how the dying spark of hope was fed,  
And how the breast was soothed, and how  
the head,

And all his hourly varied anodynes. 190

This for our wisest! and we others pine,  
And wish the long unhappy dream would  
end,

And waive all claim to bliss, and try to  
bear;

With close-lipped patience for our only  
friend,

Sad patience, too near neighbor to de-  
spair— 195

But none has hope like thine!

Thou through the fields and through the  
woods dost stray,

Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,  
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,

And every doubt long blown by time  
away. 200

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,  
And life ran gayly as the sparkling Thames;  
Before this strange disease of modern life,  
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,

Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was  
ripe— 205

Fly hence, our contact fear!

Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering  
wood!

Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern  
From her false friend's approach in Hades  
turn,<sup>3</sup>

Wave us away, and keep thy solitude! 210

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,  
Still clutching the inviolable shade,

With a free, onward impulse brushing  
through,

By night, the silvered branches of the  
glade—

Far on the forest skirts, where none  
pursue,

On some mild pastoral slope 216

Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales  
Freshen thy flowers as in former years

With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,  
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales!

<sup>2</sup>Whether or not Arnold had in mind some contemporary is not known. Carlyle has been suggested and, with much greater plausibility, Tennyson.

<sup>3</sup>The "false friend" was Æneas; see *Æneid*, VI, 469.

<sup>1</sup>Suffering.



But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!  
 For strong the infection of our mental strife,  
 Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils  
     for rest; 223  
 And we should win thee from thy own fair  
     life,  
     Like us distracted, and like us unblest.  
     Soon, soon thy cheer would die,  
 Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy  
     powers,  
     And thy clear aims be cross and shifting  
     made;  
     And then thy glad perennial youth would  
     fade, 229  
 Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and  
     smiles!  
 —As some grave Tyrian trader, from the  
     sea,  
     Descried at sunrise an emerging prow  
     Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,  
     The fringes of a southward-facing brow  
     Among the Ægean isles; 236  
 And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,  
     Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian  
     wine,  
     Green, bursting figs, and tunnies<sup>1</sup> steeped  
     in brine—  
 And knew the intruders on his ancient  
     home, 240

The young light-hearted masters of the  
     waves—  
 And snatched his rudder, and shook out  
     more sail;  
     And day and night held on indignantly  
     O'er the blue Midland<sup>2</sup> waters with the gale,  
     Betwixt the Syrtes<sup>3</sup> and soft Sicily, 245  
     To where the Atlantic raves  
 Outside the western straits; and unbent sails  
     There, where down cloudy cliffs, through  
     sheets of foam,  
     Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians<sup>4</sup> come;  
 And on the beach undid his corded bales. 250

## THYRSIS<sup>5</sup>

### A MONODY

*To commemorate the Author's friend, ARTHUR  
 HUGH CLOUGH, who died at Florence, 1861*

How changed is here each spot man makes or  
     fills!

<sup>1</sup>A large oceanic fish.      <sup>2</sup>Mediterranean.

<sup>3</sup>Shoals off the north coast of Africa.

<sup>4</sup>Inhabitants of the Spanish peninsula.

<sup>5</sup>Throughout this poem there is reference to the preceding piece, *The Scholar-Gypsy* (Arnold's note). The poem was published in 1867.

In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the  
     same;  
     The village street its haunted mansion  
     lacks,  
 And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,  
     And from the roofs the twisted chimney-  
     stacks— 5  
     Are ye too changed, ye hills?  
 See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men  
     To-night from Oxford up your pathway  
     strays!  
     Here came I often, often, in old days—  
 Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then. 10

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth  
     Farm,  
 Past the high wood, to where the elm-tree  
     crowns  
     The hill behind whose ridge the sunset  
     flames?  
 The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,  
     The Vale, the three lone weirs,<sup>6</sup> the youth-  
     ful Thames?— 15  
     This winter-eve is warm,  
 Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as spring,  
     The tender purple spray on copse and  
     briers!  
     And that sweet city with her dreaming  
     spires  
 She needs not June for beauty's heighten-  
     ing, 20

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-night!—  
     Only, methinks, some loss of habit's power  
     Befalls me wandering through this upland  
     dim.  
 Once passed I blindfold here, at any hour;  
     Now seldom come I, since I came with  
     him. 25  
     That single elm-tree bright  
 Against the west—I miss it! is it gone?  
     We prized it dearly; while it stood, we  
     said,  
     Our friend, the Gypsy-Scholar, was not  
     dead;  
 While the tree lived, he in these fields lived  
     on. 30

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here,  
     But once I knew each field, each flower, each  
     stick;  
     And with the country-folk acquaintance  
     made  
 By barn in threshing-time, by new-built  
     rick.  
     Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we first  
     assayed. 35  
     Ah me! this many a year

<sup>6</sup>Dams.

My pipe is lost, my shepherd's holiday!  
Needs must I lose them, needs with heavy  
heart  
Into the world and wave of men depart;  
But Thyrsis of his own will went away. 40

It irked him to be here, he could not rest.<sup>1</sup>  
He loved each simple joy the country yields,  
He loved his mates; but yet he could not  
keep,  
For that a shadow lowered on the fields,  
Here with the shepherds and the silly  
sheep. 45  
Some life of men unblest  
He knew, which made him droop, and filled  
his head.  
He went; his piping took a troubled sound  
Of storms that rage outside our happy  
ground; 49  
He could not wait their passing, he is dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,  
When the year's primal burst of bloom is  
o'er,  
Before the roses and the longest day—  
When garden-walks and all the grassy floor  
With blossoms red and white of fallen  
May 55  
And chestnut-flowers are strewn—  
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,  
From the wet field, through the vexed  
garden-trees,  
Come with the volleying rain and tossing  
breeze:  
*The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I!* 60

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go?  
Soon will the high Midsummer poms come  
on,  
Soon will the musk carnations break and  
swell,  
Soon shall we have gold-dusted snap-  
dragon,  
Sweet-William with its homely cottage-  
smell, 65  
And stocks in fragrant blow;  
Roses that down the alleys shine afar,  
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,  
And groups under the dreaming garden-  
trees,  
And the full moon, and the white evening-  
star. 70

He hearkens not! light comer, he is flown!  
What matters it? next year he will return,

And we shall have him in the sweet  
spring-days,  
With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling  
fern,  
And blue-bells trembling by the forest-  
ways, 75  
And scent of hay new-mown.  
But Thyrsis never more we swains shall see;  
See him come back, and cut a smother  
reed,  
And blow a strain the world at last shall  
heed—  
For Time, not Corydon, hath conquered  
thee.<sup>2</sup> 80

Alack, for Corydon no rival now!—  
But when Sicilian shepherds lost a mate,  
Some good survivor with his flute would  
go,  
Piping a ditty sad for Bion's<sup>3</sup> fate;  
And cross the unpermitted ferry's flow 85  
And relax Pluto's brow,  
And make leap up with joy the beauteous  
head  
Of Proserpine, among whose crownéd  
hair  
Are flowers first opened on Sicilian air,<sup>4</sup>  
And flute his friend, like Orpheus, from the  
dead. 90

O easy access to the hearer's grace,  
When Dorian shepherds sang to Proserpine!  
For she herself had trod Sicilian fields,  
She knew the Dorian water's gush divine,  
She knew each lily white which Enna  
yields, 95  
Each rose with blushing face;  
She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian  
strain.  
But ah, of our poor Thames she never  
heard!  
Her foot the Cumner cowslips never  
stirred;  
And we should tease her with our plaint in  
vain! 100

Well! wind-dispersed and vain the words will  
be,  
Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour  
In the old haunt, and find our tree-topped  
hill!  
Who, if not I, for questing here hath power?  
I know the wood which hides the daffodil,  
I know the Fyfield tree, 106

<sup>2</sup>Corydon is the winner in a verse-contest with Thyrsis in Virgil's *Eclogue* VII.

<sup>3</sup>Sicilian poet upon whose death Moschus wrote an elegy.

<sup>4</sup>Pluto carried off Proserpine, seizing her while she was gathering flowers at Enna in Sicily, to be his queen of the lower world.

<sup>1</sup>Clough, who was, like Arnold, a Fellow of Oriel College, left Oxford in 1843, dissatisfied with his work there and uneasy, because of religious questionings, about professing conformity to the Anglican Church, as an Oxford tutor then had to do. He tried several other kinds of work in following years.

I know what white, what purple fritillaries<sup>1</sup>  
 The grassy harvest of the river-fields,  
 Above by Ensham, down by Sandford,  
 yields,  
 And what sedged brooks are Thames's tributaries; 110

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I?—

But many a dingle on the loved hill-side,  
 With thorns once studded, old, white-blossomed trees,  
 Where thick the cowslips grew, and far  
 described

High towered the spikes of purple orchises, 115

Hath since our day put by  
 The coronals of that forgotten time,  
 Down each green bank hath gone the  
 plowboy's team,  
 And only in the hidden brookside gleam  
 Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime. 120

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's door,  
 Above the locks, above the boating throng,  
 Unmoored our skiff when through the  
 Wytham flats,

Red loosestrife<sup>2</sup> and blond meadow-sweet  
 among,

And darting swallows and light water-  
 gnats, 125

We tracked the shy Thames shore?  
 Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny  
 swell

Of our boat passing heaved the river-grass,  
 Stood with suspended scythe to see us  
 pass?—

They all are gone, and thou art gone as  
 well! 130

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too the  
 night

In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.

I see her veil draw soft across the day,

I feel her slowly chilling breath invade

The cheek grown thin, the brown hair  
 sprent<sup>3</sup> with gray; 135

I feel her finger light

Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train;—  
 The foot less prompt to meet the morning  
 dew,

The heart less bounding at emotion new,  
 And hope, once crushed, less quick to spring  
 again. 140

And long the way appears, which seemed so  
 short

To the less practiced eye of sanguine youth;  
 And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy  
 air,

The mountain-tops where is the throne of  
 Truth,

Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and  
 bare! 145

Unbreachable the fort

Of the long-battered world uplifts its wall;  
 And strange and vain the earthly turmoil  
 grows,

And near and real the charm of thy re-  
 pose, 149

And night as welcome as a friend would fall.

But hush! the upland hath a sudden loss

Of quiet!—Look, adown the dusk hillside,

A troop of Oxford hunters going home,

As in old days, jovial and talking, ride!

From hunting with the Berkshire hounds  
 they come. 155

Quick! let me fly, and cross

Into yon farther field!—'Tis done; and see,

Backed by the sunset, which doth glorify

The orange and pale violet evening-sky,

Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree! the Tree!

I take the omen! Eve lets down her veil, 161

The white fog creeps from bush to bush  
 about,

The west unflushes, the high stars grow  
 bright,

And in the scattered farms the lights come  
 out.

I cannot reach the signal-tree to-night, 165

Yet, happy omen, hail!

Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-vale<sup>4</sup>

(For there thine earth-forgetting eye-lids  
 keep

The morningless and unawakening sleep  
 Under the flowery oleanders pale), 170

Hear it, O Thyrsis, still our tree is there!—

Ah, vain! These English fields, this upland  
 dim,

These brambles pale with mist engar-  
 landed,

That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not for  
 him;

To a boon southern country he is fled, 175

And now in happier air,

Wandering with the great Mother's<sup>5</sup> train  
 divine

(And purer or more subtle soul than thee,

I trow, the mighty Mother doth not see)

Within a folding of the Apennine, 180

<sup>1</sup>A bell-shaped flower which grows in fields bordering the Thames.

<sup>2</sup>A flowering plant.

<sup>3</sup>Sprinkled.

<sup>4</sup>The Arno flows through Florence.

<sup>5</sup>Rhea, mother of the gods.



Thou hearest the immortal chants of old!—  
 Putting his sickle to the perilous grain  
 In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian king,  
 For thee the Lityrses-song again  
 Young Daphnis with his silver voice doth  
 sing;<sup>1</sup> 185  
 Sings his Sicilian fold,  
 His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded  
 eyes—  
 And how a call celestial round him rang,  
 And heavenward from the fountain-brink  
 he sprang,  
 And all the marvel of the golden skies. 190

There thou art gone, and me thou leavest here  
 Sole in these fields! yet will I not despair.  
 Despair I will not, while I yet descry  
 'Neath the mild canopy of English air  
 That lonely tree against the western sky.  
 Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear, 196  
 Our Gypsy-Scholar haunts, outliving thee!  
 Fields where soft sheep from cages pull  
 the hay,  
 Woods with anemones in flower till May,  
 Know him a wanderer still; then why not  
 me? 200

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,  
 Shy to illumine; and I seek it too.  
 This does not come with houses or with  
 gold,  
 With place, with honor, and a flattering  
 crew;  
 'Tis not in the world's market bought and  
 sold— 205  
 But the smooth-slipping weeks  
 Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired;  
 Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,  
 He wends unfollowed, he must house  
 alone; 209  
 Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired.

Thou too, O Thyr sis, on like quest wast  
 bound;  
 Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour!

<sup>1</sup>Daphnis, the ideal Sicilian shepherd of Greek pastoral poetry, was said to have followed into Phrygia his mistress Piplea, who had been carried off by robbers, and to have found her in the power of the king of Phrygia, Lityrses. Lityrses used to make strangers try a contest with him in reaping corn, and to put them to death if he overcame them. Hercules arrived in time to save Daphnis, took upon himself the reaping-contest with Lityrses, overcame him, and slew him. The Lityrses-song connected with this tradition was, like the Linus-song, one of the early plaintive strains of Greek popular poetry, and used to be sung by corn-reapers. Other traditions represented Daphnis as beloved by a nymph who exacted from him an oath to love no one else. He fell in love with a princess, and was struck blind by the jealous nymph. Mercury, who was his father, raised him to Heaven, and made a fountain spring up in the place from which he ascended. At this fountain the Sicilians offered yearly sacrifices (Arnold's note).

Men gave thee nothing; but this happy  
 quest,  
 If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee  
 power,  
 If men procured thee trouble, gave thee  
 rest. 215  
 And this rude Cumner ground,  
 Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet  
 fields,  
 Here cam'st thou in thy jocund youthful  
 time,  
 Here was thine height of strength, thy  
 golden prime! 219  
 And still the haunt beloved a virtue yields.

What though the music of thy rustic flute  
 Kept not for long its happy, country tone;  
 Lost it too soon, and learned a stormy  
 note  
 Of men contention-tossed, of men who  
 groan,  
 Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired  
 thy throat— 225  
 It failed, and thou wast mute!  
 Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,  
 And long with men of care thou couldst  
 not stay,  
 And soon thy foot resumed its wandering  
 way, 229  
 Left human haunt, and on alone till night.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here!  
 'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,  
 Thyr sis! in reach of sheep-bells is my  
 home.  
 —Then through the great town's harsh,  
 heart-wearying roar,  
 Let in thy voice a whisper often come, 235  
 To chase fatigue and fear:  
 Why faintest thou? I wandered till I died.  
 Room on! The light we sought is shining  
 still.  
 Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet crowns  
 the hill,  
 Our Scholar travels yet the loved hill-side. 240

RUGBY CHAPEL<sup>2</sup>

NOVEMBER, 1857

COLDLY, sadly descends  
 The autumn-evening. The field  
 Strewn with its dank yellow drifts  
 Of withered leaves, and the elms,  
 Fade into dimness apace, 5  
 Silent;—hardly a shout  
 From a few boys late at their play!

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1867. Arnold's father, Thomas Arnold, died on 12 June, 1842, and was buried in Rugby Chapel.

The lights come out in the street,  
In the school-room windows;—but cold,  
Solemn, unlighted, austere, 10  
Through the gathering darkness, arise  
The chapel-walls, in whose bound  
Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom  
Of the autumn evening. But ah! 15  
That word, *gloom*, to my mind  
Brings thee back, in the light  
Of thy radiant vigor, again;  
In the gloom of November we passed  
Days not dark at thy side; 20  
Seasons impaired not the ray  
Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.  
Such thou wast! and I stand  
In the autumn evening, and think  
Of bygone autumns with thee. 25

Fifteen years have gone round  
Since thou arodest to tread,  
In the summer-morning, the road  
Of death, at a call unforeseen,  
Sudden. For fifteen years, 30  
We who till then in thy shade  
Restored as under the boughs  
Of a mighty oak, have endured  
Sunshine and rain as we might,  
Bare, unshaded, alone, 35  
Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore  
Tarriest thou now? For that force,  
Surely, has not been left vain!  
Somewhere, surely, afar, 40  
In the sounding labor-house vast  
Of being, is practiced that strength,  
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,  
Conscious or not of the past, 45  
Still thou performest the word  
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—  
Prompt, unwearied, as here!  
Still thou upraiest with zeal  
The humble good from the ground, 50  
Sternly represses the bad!  
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse  
Those who with half-open eyes  
Tread the border-land dim  
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st, 55  
Succorest!—this was thy work,  
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life  
Of mortal men on the earth?—  
Most men eddy about 60  
Here and there—eat and drink,  
Chatter and love and hate,

Gather and squander, are raised  
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,  
Striving blindly, achieving 65  
Nothing; and then they die—  
Perish;—and no one asks  
Who or what they have been,  
More than he asks what waves,  
In the moonlit solitudes mild 70  
Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,  
Foamed for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst  
Ardent, unquenchable, fires, 75  
Not with the crowd to be spent,  
Not without aim to go round  
In an eddy of purposeless dust,  
Effort unmeaning and vain.  
Ah yes! some of us strive  
Not without action to die 80  
Fruitless, but something to snatch  
From dull oblivion, nor all  
Glut the devouring grave!  
We, we have chosen our path—  
Path to a clear-purposed goal, 85  
Path of advance!—but it leads  
A long, steep journey, through sunk  
Gorges, o'er mountains in snow.  
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth—  
Then, on the height, comes the storm. 90  
Thunder crashes from rock  
To rock, the cataracts reply,  
Lightnings dazzle our eyes.  
Roaring torrents have breached  
The track, the stream-bed descends 95  
In the place where the wayfarer once  
Planted his footstep—the spray  
Boils o'er its borders! aloft  
The unseen snow-beds dislodge  
Their hanging ruin; alas, 100  
Havoc is made in our train!  
Friends, who set forth at our side,  
Falter, are lost in the storm.  
We, we only are left!  
With frowning foreheads, with lips 105  
Sternly compressed, we strain on,  
On—and at nightfall at last  
Come to the end of our way,  
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;  
Where the gaunt and taciturn host 110  
Stands on the threshold, the wind  
Shaking his thin white hairs—  
Holds his lantern to scan  
Our storm-beat figures, and asks:  
Whom in our party we bring? 115  
Whom we have left in the snow?

Sadly we answer: We bring  
Only ourselves! we lost  
Sight of the rest in the storm.  
Hardly ourselves we fought through, 120

Stripped, without friends, as we are.  
Friends, companions, and train,  
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou wouldst not *alone*  
Be saved, my father! *alone* 125  
Conquer and come to thy goal,  
Leaving the rest in the wild.  
We were weary, and we  
Fearful, and we in our march  
Fain to drop down and to die. 130  
Still thou turnedst, and still  
Beckonedst the trembler, and still  
Gavest the weary thy hand.

If, in the paths of the world,  
Stones might have wounded thy feet, 135  
Toil or dejection have tried  
Thy spirit, of that we saw  
Nothing—to us thou wast still  
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm!  
Therefore to thee it was given 140  
Many to save with thyself;  
And, at the end of thy day,  
O faithful shepherd! to come,  
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

And through thee I believe 145  
In the noble and great who are gone;  
Pure souls honored and blest  
By former ages, who else—  
Such, so soulless, so poor,  
Is the race of men whom I see— 150  
Seemed but a dream of the heart,  
Seemed but a cry of desire.  
Yes! I believe that there lived  
Others like thee in the past,  
Not like the men of the crowd 155  
Who all round me to-day  
Bluster or cringe, and make life  
Hideous, and arid, and vile;  
But souls tempered with fire,  
Fervent, heroic, and good, 160  
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God!—or sons  
Shall I not call you? because  
Not as servants ye knew  
Your Father's innermost mind, 165  
His, who unwillingly sees  
One of his little ones lost—  
Yours is the praise, if mankind  
Hath not as yet in its march  
Fainted, and fallen, and died! 170

See! In the rocks of the world  
Marches the host of mankind,  
A feeble, wavering line.  
Where are they tending?—A God  
Marshaled them, gave them their goal. 175

Ah, but the way is so long!  
Years they have been in the wild!  
Sore thirst plagues them; the rocks,  
Rising all round, overawe;  
Factions divide them, their host 180  
Threatens to break, to dissolve.  
—Ah! keep, keep them combined!  
Else, of the myriads who fill  
That army, not one shall arrive;  
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks 185  
Stagger for ever in vain,  
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need  
Of your fainting, dispirited race,  
Ye, like angels, appear, 190  
Radiant with ardor divine!  
Beacons of hope, ye appear!  
Languor is not in your heart,  
Weakness is not in your word,  
Weariness not on your brow. 195  
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,  
Panic, despair, flee away.  
Ye move through the ranks, recall  
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,  
Praise, re-inspire the brave! 200  
Order, courage, return.  
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,  
Follow your steps as ye go.  
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,  
Strengthen the wavering line, 205  
Stablish, continue our march,  
On, to the bound of the waste,  
On, to the City of God.

#### STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE<sup>1</sup>

THROUGH Alpine meadows soft-suffused  
With rain, where thick the crocus blows,  
Past the dark forges long disused,  
The mule-track from Saint Laurent goes. 5  
The bridge is crossed, and slow we ride,  
Through forest, up the mountain-side.

The autumnal evening darkens round,  
The wind is up, and drives the rain;  
While, hark! far down, with strangled sound  
Doth the Dead Guier's stream complain 10  
Where that wet smoke, among the woods,  
Over his boiling caldron broods.

Swift rush the spectral vapors white  
Past limestone scars with ragged pines,  
Showing—then blotting from our sight!— 15  
Halt—through the cloud-drift something  
shines!

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1855. The Grande Chartreuse is the chief monastery of the Carthusian monks, founded in the eleventh century. It is situated in the Alps of southeastern France.



High in the valley, wet and drear,  
The huts of Courrierie appear.

*Strike leftward!* cries our guide; and higher  
Mounts up the stony forest-way. 20  
At last the encircling trees retire;  
Look! through the showery twilight gray  
What pointed roofs are these advance?—  
A palace of the Kings of France?

Approach, for what we seek is here!  
Alight, and sparsely sup, and wait 25  
For rest in this outbuilding near;  
Then cross the sward and reach that gate.  
Knock; pass the wicket! Thou art come  
To the Carthusians' world-famed home. 30

The silent courts, where night and day  
Into their stone-carved basins cold  
The splashing icy fountains play—  
The humid corridors behold!  
Where, ghostlike in the deepening night, 35  
Cowed forms brush by in gleaming white.

The chapel, where no organ's peal  
Invests the stern and naked prayer—  
With penitential cries they kneel  
And wrestle; rising then, with bare 40  
And white uplifted faces stand,  
Passing the Host from hand to hand;

Each takes, and then his visage wan  
Is buried in his cowl once more.  
The cells!—the suffering Son of Man  
Upon the wall—the knee-worn floor—  
And where they sleep, that wooden bed, 45  
Which shall their coffin be, when dead!

The library, where tract and tome  
Not to feed priestly pride are there, 50  
To hymn the conquering march of Rome,  
Nor yet to amuse, as ours are!  
They paint of souls the inner strife,  
Their drops of blood, their death in life.

The garden, overgrown—yet mild, 55  
See, fragrant herbs are flowering there!  
Strong children of the Alpine wild  
Whose culture is the brethren's care;  
Of human tasks their only one,  
And cheerful works beneath the sun. 60

Those halls, too, destined to contain  
Each its own pilgrim-host of old,<sup>1</sup>  
From England, Germany, or Spain—  
All are before me! I behold  
The House, the Brotherhood austere!  
—And what am I, that I am here? 65

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,  
And purged its faith, and trimmed its fire,  
Showed me the high, white star of Truth,  
There bade me gaze, and there aspire. 70  
Even now their whispers pierce the gloom:  
*What dost thou in this living tomb?*

Forgive me, masters of the mind!  
At whose behest I long ago  
So much unlearned, so much resigned— 75  
I come not here to be your foe!  
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,  
To curse and to deny your truth;

Not as their friend, or child, I speak!  
But as, on some far northern strand, 80  
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek  
In pity and mournful awe might stand  
Before some fallen Runic stone—  
For both were faiths, and both are gone.

Wandering between two worlds, one dead, 85  
The other powerless to be born,  
With nowhere yet to rest my head,  
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.  
Their faith, my tears, the world deride—  
I come to shed them at their side. 90

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,  
Ye solemn seats of holy pain!  
Take me, cowed forms, and fence me round,  
Till I possess my soul again;  
Till free my thoughts before me roll, 95  
Not chafed by hourly false control!

For the world cries your faith is now  
But a dead time's exploded dream;  
My melancholy, sciolists<sup>2</sup> say,  
Is a passed mode, an outworn theme— 100  
As if the world had ever had  
A faith, or sciolists been sad!

Ah, if it *be* passed, take away,  
At least, the restlessness, the pain;  
Be man henceforth no more a prey 105  
To these out-dated stings again!  
The nobleness of grief is gone—  
Ah, leave us not the fret alone!

But—if you cannot give us ease—  
Last of the race of them who grieve 110  
Here leave us to die out with these  
Last of the people who believe!  
Silent, while years engrave the brow;  
Silent—the best are silent now.

Achilles ponders in his tent,<sup>3</sup> 115  
The kings of modern thought are dumb;

<sup>1</sup>Carthusian monks on pilgrimage.

<sup>2</sup>Smatterers.

<sup>3</sup>*Iliad*, Bk. I.

Silent they are, though not content,  
And wait to see the future come.  
They have the grief men had of yore,  
But they contend and cry no more. 120

Our fathers watered with their tears  
This sea of time whereon we sail,  
Their voices were in all men's ears  
Who passed within their puissant hail.  
Still the same ocean round us raves, 125  
But we stand mute, and watch the waves.

For what availed it, all the noise  
And outcry of the former men?—  
Say, have their sons achieved more joys,  
Say, is life lighter now than then? 130  
The sufferers died, they left their pain—  
The pangs which tortured them remain.

What helps it now, that Byron bore,  
With haughty scorn which mocked the smart,  
Through Europe to the Ætolian shore<sup>1</sup> 135  
The pageant of his bleeding heart?  
That thousands counted every groan,  
And Europe made his woe her own?

What boots it, Shelley! that the breeze  
Carried thy lovely wail away, 140  
Musical through Italian trees  
Which fringe thy soft blue Spezzian bay?<sup>2</sup>  
Inheritors of thy distress  
Have restless hearts one throb the less?

Or are we easier, to have read, 145  
O Obermann!<sup>3</sup> the sad, stern page,  
Which tells us how thou hid'st thy head  
From the fierce tempest of thine age  
In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,  
Or chalets near the Alpine snow? 150

Ye slumber in your silent grave!—  
The world, which for an idle day  
Grace to your mood of sadness gave,  
Long since hath flung her weeds away.  
The eternal trifler breaks your spell; 155  
But we—we learned your lore too well!

Years hence, perhaps, may dawn an age,  
More fortunate, alas! than we,  
Which without hardness will be sage,  
And gay without frivolity. 160  
Sons of the world, oh, speed those years;  
But, while we wait, allow our tears!

Allow them! We admire with awe  
The exulting thunder of your race;  
You give the universe your law, 165  
You triumph over time and space!  
Your pride of life, your tireless powers,  
We laud them, but they are not ours.

We are like children reared in shade  
Beneath some old-world abbey wall, 170  
Forgotten in a forest-glade,  
And secret from the eyes of all.  
Deep, deep the greenwood round them waves,  
Their abbey, and its close<sup>4</sup> of graves!

But, where the road runs near the stream, 175  
Oft through the trees they catch a glance  
Of passing troops in the sun's beam—  
Pennon, and plume, and flashing lance!  
Forth to the world those soldiers fare,  
To life, to cities, and to war! 180

And through the wood, another way,  
Faint bugle-notes from far are borne,  
Where hunters gather, staghounds bay,  
Round some fair forest-lodge at morn.  
Gay dames are there, in sylvan green; 185  
Laughter and cries—those notes between!

The banners flashing through the trees  
Make their blood dance and chain their eyes,  
That bugle-music on the breeze  
Arrests them with a charmed surprise. 190  
Banner by turns and bugle woo:  
*Ye shy recluses, follow too!*

O children, what do ye reply?—  
“Action and pleasure, will ye roam  
Through these secluded dells to cry 195  
And call us?—but too late ye come!  
Too late for us your call ye blow,  
Whose bent was taken long ago.

“Long since we pace this shadowed nave;  
We watch those yellow tapers shine, 200  
Emblems of hope over the grave,  
In the high altar's depth divine;  
The organ carries to our ear  
Its accents of another sphere.

“Fenced early in this cloistral round 205  
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,  
How should we grow in other ground?  
How can we flower in foreign air?  
—Pass, banners, pass, and bugles, cease;  
And leave our desert to its peace!” 210

<sup>1</sup>Grecian shore.

<sup>2</sup>Shelley's last days were spent on the shores of the Gulf of Spezzia, on the northwestern coast of Italy.

<sup>3</sup>Senancour whose book is entitled *Obermann*.

<sup>4</sup>Enclosed plot.

## THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY (1825-1895)

Huxley's father at the time of his son's birth, on 4 May, 1825, was senior assistant-master of a school at Ealing. He was not, apparently, a very competent man, and had no means with which to give his son a thorough education. Huxley himself wished to be a mechanical engineer, but instead, as the only practicable course open, after a rather haphazard elementary education, he was set to studying medicine under the direction of his brother-in-law, who was a physician. He completed his medical education at the Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, at the same time turning his attention, increasingly towards the close of his course of study, to the natural sciences. In 1845 he obtained his medical degree and a gold medal for anatomy and physiology from the University of London. In the following year he entered the Naval Medical Service and was appointed assistant-surgeon of the surveying ship *Rattlesnake*. This ship was bound on a voyage in which its major business was to chart a passage through reefs off the coast of Australia. The Admiralty recognized the opportunities for the advancement of natural science offered by its voyage, and not only did the ship carry an official naturalist, but Huxley's own appointment was the result of his scientific interests. During the four years of the *Rattlesnake's* voyage Huxley, by his observations and articles, laid the foundations of his career as a natural scientist, though, owing to the ship's remoteness and movements, he heard nothing until his return to England, in 1850, about the fate of the articles he kept sending back. The year after his return, however, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in recognition of the value of his work, and in 1852 he was awarded the Royal Society's Gold Medal. At the same time he complained bitterly that these were empty honors when he could find no position with an adequate salary which would enable him to continue his scientific work. But after several years, in 1854, he was appointed Professor of Natural History and Paleontology in the Royal School of Mines and Curator of Fossils in the Museum of Practical Geology, and these appointments set him on his feet. In 1855 he married Miss Henrietta Anne Heathorn, whom he had met in Australia.

From this time on Huxley led an extremely busy life, partly because of what he considered the proper demands of science, and partly because he was constantly in need of money for the support of his growing family. He held a succession of

important academic posts until his final retirement, he sat on ten royal commissions besides holding various other government positions, he administered the affairs of several scientific societies, and he did a great deal of popular or controversial writing and lecturing. As he grew older he attained a more than national eminence. In 1866 he received an honorary degree from Edinburgh University; in 1870 he was elected President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; in 1871 he was appointed Secretary of the Royal Society; in 1872 he was elected Lord Rector of Aberdeen University; in 1879 he received an honorary degree from Cambridge; in 1883 he was elected President of the Royal Society; in 1885 he received the degree of D.C.L. from Oxford; and in 1892 he was made a Privy Councillor. He died on 29 June, 1895.

When Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published in 1859 and aroused a clerical, and to some extent a popular, uproar, Huxley immediately appeared as the champion of evolution. And thereafter he did less purely scientific work and devoted his time increasingly to controversial writing and popular lecturing in support of the theory of evolution and of the study of science in general. For this he was exceptionally fitted, as he had a quick and versatile mind and was the master of a vivid and energetic style. He himself came to recognize that here lay his true field. In an autobiographic sketch, speaking of his aims in life he said, "They are briefly these: To promote the increase of natural knowledge and to forward the application of scientific methods of investigation to all the problems of life to the best of my ability, in the conviction which has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, that there is no alleviation for the sufferings of mankind except veracity of thought and of action, and the resolute facing of the world as it is when the garment of make-believe by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features is stripped off. It is with this intent that I have subordinated any reasonable, or unreasonable, ambition for scientific fame which I may have permitted myself to entertain to other ends; to the popularization of science; to the development and organization of scientific education; to the endless series of battles and skirmishes over evolution; and to untiring opposition to that ecclesiastical spirit, that clericalism, which in England, as everywhere else, and to whatever denomination it may belong, is the deadly enemy of science."<sup>22</sup>



ON THE ADVISABLENESS  
OF IMPROVING NATURAL  
KNOWLEDGE<sup>1</sup>

THIS time two hundred years ago—in the beginning of January, 1666—those of our forefathers who inhabited this great and ancient city, took breath between the shocks of two fearful calamities: one not quite past, although its fury had abated; the other to come.

Within a few yards of the very spot on which we are assembled, so the tradition runs, that painful and deadly malady, the plague, appeared in the latter months of 1664; and, though no new visitor, smote the people of England, and especially of her capital, with a violence unknown before, in the course of the following year. The hand of a master has pictured what happened in those dismal months; and in that truest of fictions, *The History of the Plague Year*, Defoe shows death, with every accompaniment of pain and terror, stalking through the narrow streets of old London, and changing their busy hum into a silence broken only by the wailing of the mourners of fifty thousand dead; by the woe-ful denunciations and mad prayers of fanatics; and by the madder yells of despairing profligates.

But, about this time in 1666, the death-rate had sunk to nearly its ordinary amount; a case of plague occurred only here and there, and the richer citizens who had flown from the pest had returned to their dwellings. The remnant of the people began to toil at the accustomed round of duty, or of pleasure; and the stream of city life bid fair to flow back along its old bed, with renewed and uninterrupted vigor.

The newly-kindled hope was deceitful. The great plague, indeed, returned no more; but what it had done for the Londoners, the great fire, which broke out in the autumn of 1666, did for London; and, in September of that year, a heap of ashes and the indestructible energy of the people were all that remained of the glory of five-sixths of the city within the walls.

Our forefathers had their own ways of accounting for each of these calamities. They submitted to the plague in humility and in penitence, for they believed it to be the judgment of God. But, towards the fire they were furiously indignant, interpreting it as the effect of the malice of man,—as the work of the Republicans, or of the Papists, according as their prepossessions ran in favor of loyalty or of Puritanism.

It would, I fancy, have fared but ill with one who, standing where I now stand, in what was then a thickly-peopled and fashionable part of London, should have broached to our ancestors the doctrine which I now propound to you—that all their hypotheses were alike wrong; that the plague was no more, in their sense, Divine judgment, than the fire was the work of any political, or of any religious, sect; but that they were themselves the authors of both plague and fire, and that they must look to themselves to prevent the recurrence of calamities, to all appearance so peculiarly beyond the reach of human control—so evidently the result of the wrath of God, or of the craft and subtlety of an enemy.

And one may picture to one's self how harmoniously the holy cursing of the Puritan of that day would have chimed in with the unholy cursing and the crackling wit of the Rochesters and Sedleys,<sup>2</sup> and with the revilings of the political fanatics, if my imaginary plain dealer had gone on to say that, if the return of such misfortunes were ever rendered impossible, it would not be in virtue of the victory of the faith of Laud,<sup>3</sup> or of that of Milton; and, as little, by the triumph of republicanism, as by that of monarchy. But that the one thing needful for compassing this end was, that the people of England should second the efforts of an insignificant corporation, the establishment of which, a few years before the epoch of the great plague and the great fire, had been as little noticed, as they were conspicuous.

Some twenty years before the outbreak of the plague a few calm and thoughtful students banded themselves together for the purpose, as they phrased it, of "improving natural knowledge." The ends they pro-

<sup>1</sup>Delivered as a Lay Sermon in St. Martin's Hall, London, on 7 January, 1866. The essay was later published in the *Fortnightly Review* and was reprinted in *Methods and Results* (Collected Essays, Vol. I). This and the two following essays are reprinted with the permission of the authorized publishers of Huxley's *Collected Essays*, Messrs. D. Appleton and Company.

<sup>2</sup>Dissolute wits of the Restoration era.

<sup>3</sup>William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born in 1573 and was beheaded by order of Parliament in 1645. He violently opposed puritanism.

posed to attain cannot be stated more clearly than in the words of one of the founders of the organization:

Our business was (precluding matters of theology and state affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical inquiries, and such as related thereunto:—as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Staticks, Magneticks, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments; with the state of these studies and their cultivation at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the veins, the *venæ lacteæ*,<sup>1</sup> the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape (as it then appeared) of Saturn, the spots on the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography<sup>2</sup> of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes and grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities and nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian experiment in quicksilver,<sup>3</sup> the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, with divers other things of like nature, some of which were then but new discoveries, and others not so generally known and embraced as now they are; with other things appertaining to what hath been called the New Philosophy, which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England.

The learned Dr. Wallis,<sup>4</sup> writing in 1696, narrates in these words, what happened half a century before, or about 1645. The associates met at Oxford, in the rooms of Dr. Wilkins,<sup>5</sup> who was destined to become a bishop; and subsequently coming together in London, they attracted the notice of the king. And it is a strange evidence of the taste for knowledge which the most obviously worthless of the Stuarts shared with his father and grandfather, that Charles the Second was not content with saying witty things about his philosophers, but did wise things with regard to them. For he not only bestowed upon them such attention as he could spare from his poodles and his mistresses, but, being in his usual state of impecuniosity, begged for

them of the Duke of Ormond; and, that step being without effect, gave them Chelsea College, a charter, and a mace: crowning his favors in the best way they could be crowned, by burdening them no further with royal patronage or state interference.

Thus it was that the half-dozen young men, studious of the "New Philosophy," who met in one another's lodgings in Oxford or in London, in the middle of the seventeenth century, grew in numerical and in real strength, until, in its latter part, the "Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge" had already become famous, and had acquired a claim upon the veneration of Englishmen, which it has ever since retained, as the principal focus of scientific activity in our islands, and the chief champion of the cause it was formed to support.

It was by the aid of the Royal Society that Newton published his *Principia*. If all the books in the world, except the *Philosophical Transactions*, were destroyed, it is safe to say that the foundations of physical science would remain unshaken, and that the vast intellectual progress of the last two centuries would be largely, though incompletely, recorded. Nor have any signs of halting or of decrepitude manifested themselves in our own times. As in Dr. Wallis's days, so in these, "our business is, precluding theology and state affairs, to discourse and consider of philosophical inquiries." But our "Mathematick" is one which Newton would have to go to school to learn; our "Staticks, Mechanicks, Magneticks, Chymicks, and Natural Experiments" constitute a mass of physical and chemical knowledge, a glimpse at which would compensate Galileo for the doings of a score of inquisitorial cardinals;<sup>6</sup> our "Physick" and "Anatomy" have embraced such infinite varieties of being, have laid open such new worlds in time and space, have grappled, not unsuccessfully, with such complex problems, that the eyes of Vesalius and of Harvey<sup>7</sup> might be dazzled by the sight of the tree that has grown out of their grain of mustard seed.

The fact is perhaps rather too much, than too little, forced upon one's notice, nowadays, that all this marvelous intellectual growth has

<sup>1</sup>Lacteal veins.      <sup>2</sup>Study or mapping of the moon.

<sup>3</sup>It demonstrated the principle of the barometer, discovered by Evangelista Torricelli (1608-1647), the Italian physicist.

<sup>4</sup>John Wallis (1616-1703), Oxford mathematician.

<sup>5</sup>John Wilkins (1614-1672) of Wadham College, Bishop of Chester.

<sup>6</sup>Galileo was forced by the Inquisition in 1633 to withdraw his support of the Copernican hypothesis.

<sup>7</sup>Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564), anatomist, was one of the earliest to practice systematic dissection. William Harvey (1578-1657) discovered the circulation of the blood.



a no less wonderful expression in practical life; and that, in this respect, if in no other, the movement symbolized by the progress of the Royal Society stands without a parallel in the history of mankind.

A series of volumes as bulky as the *Transactions of the Royal Society* might possibly be filled with the subtle speculations of the Schoolmen;<sup>1</sup> not improbably, the obtaining a mastery over the products of medieval thought might necessitate an even greater expenditure of time and of energy than the acquirement of the "New Philosophy"; but though such work engrossed the best intellects of Europe for a longer time than has elapsed since the great fire, its effects were "writ in water," so far as our social state is concerned.

On the other hand, if the noble first President of the Royal Society could revisit the upper air and once more gladden his eyes with a sight of the familiar mace, he would find himself in the midst of a material civilization more different from that of his day, than that of the seventeenth was from that of the first century. And if Lord Brouncker's native sagacity had not deserted his ghost, he would need no long reflection to discover that all these great ships, these railways, these telegraphs, these factories, these printing-presses, without which the whole fabric of modern English society would collapse into a mass of stagnant and starving pauperism,—that all these pillars of our State are but the ripples and the bubbles upon the surface of that great spiritual stream, the springs of which only, he and his fellows were privileged to see; and seeing, to recognize as that which it behooved them above all things to keep pure and undefiled.

It may not be too great a flight of imagination to conceive our noble *revenant*<sup>2</sup> not forgetful of the great troubles of his own day, and anxious to know how often London had been burned down since his time, and how often the plague had carried off its thousands. He would have to learn that, although London contains tenfold the inflammable matter that it did in 1666; though, not content with filling our rooms with woodwork and light draperies, we must needs lead inflammable and explosive gases into every corner of our streets and houses, we never allow even a street to

burn down. And if he asked how this had come about, we should have to explain that the improvement of natural knowledge has furnished us with dozens of machines for throwing water upon fires, any one of which would have furnished the ingenious Mr. Hooke, the first "curator and experimenter" of the Royal Society, with ample materials for discourse before half a dozen meetings of that body; and that, to say truth, except for the progress of natural knowledge, we should not have been able to make even the tools by which these machines are constructed. And, further, it would be necessary to add, that although severe fires sometimes occur and inflict great damage, the loss is very generally compensated by societies, the operations of which have been rendered possible only by the progress of natural knowledge in the direction of mathematics, and the accumulation of wealth in virtue of other natural knowledge.

But the plague? My Lord Brouncker's observation would not, I fear, lead him to think that Englishmen of the nineteenth century are purer in life, or more fervent in religious faith, than the generation which could produce a Boyle, an Evelyn,<sup>3</sup> and a Milton. He might find the mud of society at the bottom, instead of at the top, but I fear that the sum total would be as deserving of swift judgment as at the time of the Restoration. And it would be our duty to explain once more, and this time not without shame, that we have no reason to believe that it is the improvement of our faith, nor that of our morals, which keeps the plague from our city; but, again, that it is the improvement of our natural knowledge.

We have learned that pestilences will only take up their abode among those who have prepared unswept and ungarnished residences for them. Their cities must have narrow, unwatered streets, foul with accumulated garbage. Their houses must be ill-drained, ill-lighted, ill-ventilated. Their subjects must be ill-washed, ill-fed, ill-clothed. The London of 1665 was such a city. The cities of the East, where plague has an enduring dwelling, are such cities. We, in later times, have learned somewhat of Nature, and partly obey her. Because of this partial

<sup>1</sup>Scholastic philosophers of the Middle Age.

<sup>2</sup>Ghost.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Boyle (1627-1691), chemist, and John Evelyn (1620-1706), diarist.



improvement of our natural knowledge and of that fractional obedience, we have no plague; because that knowledge is still very imperfect and that obedience yet incomplete, typhoid is our companion and cholera our visitor. But it is not presumptuous to express the belief that, when our knowledge is more complete and our obedience the expression of our knowledge, London will count her centuries of freedom from typhoid and cholera, as she now gratefully reckons her two hundred years of ignorance of that plague which swooped upon her thrice in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Surely, there is nothing in these explanations which is not fully borne out by the facts? Surely, the principles involved in them are now admitted among the fixed beliefs of all thinking men? Surely, it is true that our countrymen are less subject to fire, famine, pestilence, and all the evils which result from a want of command over and due anticipation of the course of Nature, than were the countrymen of Milton; and health, wealth, and well-being are more abundant with us than with them? But no less certainly is the difference due to the improvement of our knowledge of Nature, and the extent to which that improved knowledge has been incorporated with the household words of men, and has supplied the springs of their daily actions.

Granting for a moment, then, the truth of that which the depreciators of natural knowledge are so fond of urging, that its improvement can only add to the resources of our material civilization; admitting it to be possible that the founders of the Royal Society themselves looked for no other reward than this, I cannot confess that I was guilty of exaggeration when I hinted, that to him who had the gift of distinguishing between prominent events and important events, the origin of a combined effort on the part of mankind to improve natural knowledge might have loomed larger than the Plague and have outshone the glare of the Fire; as a something fraught with a wealth of beneficence to mankind, in comparison with which the damage done by those ghastly evils would shrink into insignificance.

It is very certain that for every victim slain by the Plague, hundreds of mankind exist and find a fair share of happiness in the world

by the aid of the spinning jenny. And the great Fire, at its worst, could not have burned the supply of coal, the daily working of which, in the bowels of the earth, made possible by the steam pump, gives rise to an amount of wealth to which the millions lost in old London are but as an old song.

But spinning jenny and steam pump are, after all, but toys, possessing an accidental value; and natural knowledge creates multitudes of more subtle contrivances, the praises of which do not happen to be sung because they are not directly convertible into instruments for creating wealth. When I contemplate natural knowledge squandering such gifts among men, the only appropriate comparison I can find for her is, to liken her to such a peasant woman as one sees in the Alps, striding ever upward, heavily burdened, and with mind bent only on her home; but yet without effort and without thought, knitting for her children. Now stockings are good and comfortable things, and the children will undoubtedly be much the better for them; but surely it would be short-sighted, to say the least of it, to depreciate this toiling mother as a mere stocking-machine—a mere provider of physical comforts?

However, there are blind leaders of the blind, and not a few of them, who take this view of natural knowledge, and can see nothing in the bountiful mother of humanity but a sort of comfort-grinding machine. According to them, the improvement of natural knowledge always has been, and always must be, synonymous with no more than the improvement of the material resources and the increase of the gratifications of men.

Natural knowledge is, in their eyes, no real mother of mankind, bringing them up with kindness, and, if need be, with sternness, in the way they should go, and instructing them in all things needful for their welfare; but a sort of fairy godmother, ready to furnish her pets with shoes of swiftness, swords of sharpness, and omnipotent Aladdin's lamps, so that they may have telegraphs to Saturn, and see the other side of the moon, and thank God they are better than their benighted ancestors.

If this talk were true, I, for one, should not greatly care to toil in the service of natural knowledge. I think I would just as soon be quietly chipping my own flint ax, after the manner of my forefathers a few thousand

years back, as be troubled with the endless malady of thought which now infests us all, for such reward. But I venture to say that such views are contrary alike to reason and to fact. Those who discourse in such fashion seem to me to be so intent upon trying to see what is above Nature, or what is behind her, that they are blind to what stares them in the face in her.

I should not venture to speak thus strongly if my justification were not to be found in the simplest and most obvious facts,—if it needed more than an appeal to the most notorious truths to justify my assertion, that the improvement of natural knowledge, whatever direction it has taken, and however low the aims of those who may have commenced it—has not only conferred practical benefits on men, but, in so doing, has effected a revolution in their conceptions of the universe and of themselves, and has profoundly altered their modes of thinking and their views of right and wrong. I say that natural knowledge, seeking to satisfy natural wants, has found the ideas which can alone still spiritual cravings. I say that natural knowledge, in desiring to ascertain the laws of comfort, has been driven to discover those of conduct, and to lay the foundations of a new morality.

Let us take these points separately; and first, what great ideas has natural knowledge introduced into men's minds?

I cannot but think that the foundations of all natural knowledge were laid when the reason of man first came face to face with the facts of Nature; when the savage first learned that the fingers of one hand are fewer than those of both; that it is shorter to cross a stream than to head it; that a stone stops where it is unless it be moved, and that it drops from the hand which lets it go; that light and heat come and go with the sun; that sticks burn away in a fire; that plants and animals grow and die; that if he struck his fellow savage a blow he would make him angry, and perhaps get a blow in return, while if he offered him a fruit he would please him, and perhaps receive a fish in exchange. When men had acquired this much knowledge, the outlines, rude though they were, of mathematics, of physics, of chemistry, of biology, of moral, economical, and political science, were sketched. Nor did the germ of religion fail when science began to bud. Listen to

words which, though new, are yet three thousand years old:—

. . . When in heaven the stars about the moon  
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,  
And every height comes out, and jutting peak  
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens  
Break open to their highest, and all the stars  
Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart.<sup>1</sup>

If the half savage Greek could share our feelings thus far, it is irrational to doubt that he went further, to find as we do, that upon that brief gladness there follows a certain sorrow,—the little light of awakened human intelligence shines so mere a spark amidst the abyss of the unknown and unknowable; seems so insufficient to do more than illuminate the imperfections that cannot be remedied, the aspirations that cannot be realized, of man's own nature. But in this sadness, this consciousness of the limitation of man, this sense of an open secret which he cannot penetrate, lies the essence of all religion; and the attempt to embody it in the forms furnished by the intellect is the origin of the higher theologies.

Thus it seems impossible to imagine but that the foundations of all knowledge—secular or sacred—were laid when intelligence dawned, though the superstructure remained for long ages so slight and feeble as to be compatible with the existence of almost any general view respecting the mode of governance of the universe. No doubt, from the first, there were certain phenomena which, to the rudest mind, presented a constancy of occurrence, and suggested that a fixed order ruled, at any rate, among them. I doubt if the grossest of fetish worshipers ever imagined that a stone must have a god within it to make it fall, or that a fruit had a god within it to make it taste sweet. With regard to such matters as these, it is hardly questionable that mankind from the first took strictly positive and scientific views.<sup>2</sup>

But, with respect to all the less familiar occurrences which present themselves, un-

<sup>1</sup>Need it be said that this is Tennyson's English for Homer's Greek? (Huxley's note. The passage is from Tennyson's *Specimen of a Translation of the Iliad in Blank Verse*, and is a translation of ll. 555–559 of Bk. VIII of the *Iliad*.)

<sup>2</sup>An allusion to the contention of Auguste Comte (1798–1857) in his Positivist philosophy that the progress of human thought has been through a theological to a metaphysical stage and from the latter to a “positive” stage, wherein it is recognized that reality is adequately summed up in the process of scientific observation and generalization.



cultured man, no doubt, has always taken himself as the standard of comparison, as the center and measure of the world; nor could he well avoid doing so. And finding that his apparently uncaused will has a powerful effect in giving rise to many occurrences, he naturally enough ascribed other and greater events to other and greater volitions, and came to look upon the world and all that therein is, as the product of the volitions of persons like himself, but stronger, and capable of being appeased or angered, as he himself might be soothed or irritated. Through such conceptions of the plan and working of the universe all mankind have passed, or are passing. And we may now consider what has been the effect of the improvement of natural knowledge on the views of men who have reached this stage, and who have begun to cultivate natural knowledge with no desire but that of "increasing God's honor and bettering man's estate."<sup>1</sup>

For example, what could seem wiser, from a mere material point of view, more innocent, from a theological one, to an ancient people, than that they should learn the exact succession of the seasons, as warnings for their husbandmen; or the position of the stars, as guides to their rude navigators? But what has grown out of this search for natural knowledge of so merely useful a character? You all know the reply. Astronomy,—which of all sciences has filled men's minds with general ideas of a character most foreign to their daily experience, and has, more than any other, rendered it impossible for them to accept the beliefs of their fathers. Astronomy,—which tells them that this so vast and seemingly solid earth is but an atom among atoms, whirling, no man knows whither, through illimitable space; which demonstrates that what we call the peaceful heaven above us, is but that space, filled by an infinitely subtle matter whose particles are seething and surging, like the waves of an angry sea; which opens up to us infinite regions where nothing is known, or ever seems to have been known, but matter and force, operating according to rigid rules; which leads us to contemplate phenomena the very nature of which demonstrates that they must have had a beginning, and that they must have an end, but the very nature of which also proves

that the beginning was, to our conceptions of time, infinitely remote, and that the end is as immeasurably distant.

But it is not alone those who pursue astronomy who ask for bread and receive ideas. What more harmless than the attempt to lift and distribute water by pumping it; what more absolutely and grossly utilitarian? Yet out of pumps grew the discussions about Nature's abhorrence of a vacuum; and then it was discovered that Nature does not abhor a vacuum, but that air has weight; and that notion paved the way for the doctrine that all matter has weight, and that the force which produces weight is co-extensive with the universe,—in short, to the theory of universal gravitation and endless force. While learning how to handle gases led to the discovery of oxygen, and to modern chemistry, and to the notion of the indestructibility of matter.

Again, what simpler, or more absolutely practical, than the attempt to keep the axle of a wheel from heating when the wheel turns round very fast? How useful for carters and gig drivers to know something about this; and how good were it, if any ingenious person would find out the cause of such phenomena, and thence educe a general remedy for them. Such an ingenious person was Count Rumford;<sup>2</sup> and he and his successors have landed us in the theory of the persistence, or indestructibility, of force. And in the infinitely minute, as in the infinitely great, the seekers after natural knowledge of the kinds called physical and chemical, have everywhere found a definite order and succession of events which seem never to be infringed.

And how has it fared with "Physick" and Anatomy? Have the anatomist, the physiologist, or the physician, whose business it has been to devote themselves assiduously to that eminently practical and direct end, the alleviation of the sufferings of mankind,—have they been able to confine their vision more absolutely to the strictly useful? I fear they are the worst offenders of all. For if the astronomer has set before us the infinite magnitude of space, and the practical eternity of the duration of the universe; if the physical and chemical philosophers have demonstrated

<sup>1</sup>See Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, I, 9, 11.

<sup>2</sup>Born in Massachusetts in 1753, he sided with the British during the American Revolution and later lived in Bavaria. He was created a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, and died in 1814.



the infinite minuteness of its constituent parts, and the practical eternity of matter and of force; and if both have alike proclaimed the universality of a definite and predicable order and succession of events, the workers in biology have not only accepted all these, but have added more startling theses of their own. For, as the astronomers discover in the earth no center of the universe, but an eccentric speck, so the naturalists find man to be no center of the living world, but one amidst endless modifications of life; and as the astronomer observes the mark of practically endless time set upon the arrangements of the solar system so the student of life finds the records of ancient forms of existence peopling the world for ages, which, in relation to human experience, are infinite.

Furthermore, the physiologist finds life to be as dependent for its manifestation on particular molecular arrangements as any physical or chemical phenomenon; and wherever he extends his researches, fixed order and unchanging causation reveal themselves, as plainly as in the rest of Nature.

Nor can I find that any other fate has awaited the germ of religion. Arising, like all other kinds of knowledge, out of the action and interaction of man's mind, with that which is not man's mind, it has taken the intellectual coverings of fetishism or polytheism; of theism or atheism; of superstition or rationalism. With these, and their relative merits and demerits, I have nothing to do; but this it is needful for my purpose to say, that if the religion of the present differs from that of the past, it is because the theology of the present has become more scientific than that of the past; because it has not only renounced idols of wood and idols of stone, but begins to see the necessity of breaking in pieces the idols built up of books and traditions and finespun ecclesiastical cobwebs; and of cherishing the noblest and most human of man's emotions, by worship "for the most part of the silent sort" at the altar of the Unknown.<sup>1</sup>

Such are a few of the new conceptions implanted in our minds by the improvement of natural knowledge. Men have acquired the ideas of the practically infinite extent of the universe and of its practical eternity; they are

familiar with the conception that our earth is but an infinitesimal fragment of that part of the universe which can be seen; and that, nevertheless, its duration is, as compared with our standards of time, infinite. They have further acquired the idea that man is but one of innumerable forms of life now existing on the globe, and that the present existences are but the last of an immeasurable series of predecessors. Moreover, every step they have made in natural knowledge has tended to extend and rivet in their minds the conception of a definite order of the universe—which is embodied in what are called, by an unhappy metaphor, the laws of Nature—and to narrow the range and loosen the force of men's belief in spontaneity, or in changes other than such as arise out of that definite order itself.

Whether these ideas are well or ill founded is not the question. No one can deny that they exist, and have been the inevitable outgrowth of the improvement of natural knowledge. And if so, it cannot be doubted that they are changing the form of men's most cherished and most important convictions.

And as regards the second point—the extent to which the improvement of natural knowledge has remodeled and altered what may be termed the intellectual ethics of men,—what are among the moral convictions most fondly held by barbarous and semi-barbarous people.

They are the convictions that authority is the soundest basis of belief; that merit attaches to a readiness to believe; that the doubting disposition is a bad one, and scepticism a sin; that when good authority has pronounced what is to be believed, and faith has accepted it, reason has no further duty. There are many excellent persons who yet hold by these principles, and it is not my present business, or intention, to discuss their views. All I wish to bring clearly before your minds is the unquestionable fact, that the improvement of natural knowledge is effected by methods which directly give the lie to all these convictions, and assume the exact reverse of each to be true.

The improver of natural knowledge absolutely refuses to acknowledge authority, as such. For him, scepticism is the highest of duties; blind faith the one unpardonable sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cher-

<sup>1</sup>See Acts, xvii, 23. The words within quotation-marks are Carlyle's.

ishing of the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith; and the most ardent votary of science holds his firmest convictions, not because the men he most venerates hold them; not because their verity is testified by portents and wonders; but because his experience teaches him that whenever he chooses to bring these convictions into contact with their primary source, Nature—whenever he thinks fit to test them by appealing to experiment and to observation—Nature will confirm them. The man of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification.

Thus, without for a moment pretending to despise the practical results of the improvement of natural knowledge, and its beneficial influence on material civilization, it must, I think, be admitted that the great ideas, some of which I have indicated, and the ethical spirit which I have endeavored to sketch, in the few moments which remained at my disposal, constitute the real and permanent significance of natural knowledge.

If these ideas be destined, as I believe they are, to be more and more firmly established as the world grows older; if that spirit be fated, as I believe it is, to extend itself into all departments of human thought, and to become co-extensive with the range of knowledge; if, as our race approaches its maturity, it discovers, as I believe it will, that there is but one kind of knowledge and but one method of acquiring it; then we, who are still children, may justly feel it our highest duty to recognize the advisableness of improving natural knowledge, and so to aid ourselves and our successors in our course towards the noble goal which lies before mankind.

## A LIBERAL EDUCATION; AND WHERE TO FIND IT<sup>1</sup>

THE business which the South London Working Men's College has undertaken is a great work; indeed, I might say, that Education, with which that college proposes to grapple, is the greatest work of all those which lie ready to a man's hand just at present.

<sup>1</sup>An address delivered at the South London Working Men's College on 4 January, 1868; later published in *Macmillan's Magazine* and reprinted in *Science and Education (Collected Essays, Vol. III)*. The College was founded by F. D. Maurice in 1854.

And, at length, this fact is becoming generally recognized. You cannot go anywhere without hearing a buzz of more or less confused and contradictory talk on this subject—nor can you fail to notice that, in one point at any rate, there is a very decided advance upon like discussions in former days. No body outside the agricultural interest now dares to say that education is a bad thing. If any representative of the once large and powerful party, which, in former days, proclaimed this opinion, still exists in the semi-fossil state, he keeps his thoughts to himself. In fact, there is a chorus of voices, almost distressing in their harmony, raised in favor of the doctrine that education is the great panacea for human troubles, and that, if the country is not shortly to go to the dogs, everybody must be educated.

The politicians tell us, "You must educate the masses because they are going to be masters." The clergy join in the cry for education, for they affirm that the people are drifting away from church and chapel into the broadest infidelity. The manufacturers and the capitalists swell the chorus lustily. They declare that ignorance makes bad workmen; that England will soon be unable to turn out cotton goods, or steam engines, cheaper than other people; and then, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory will be departed from us.<sup>2</sup> And a few voices are lifted up in favor of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being, doing, and suffering, and that it is as true now, as it ever was, that the people perish for lack of knowledge.

These members of the minority, with whom I confess I have a good deal of sympathy, are doubtful whether any of the other reasons urged in favor of the education of the people are of much value—whether, indeed, some of them are based upon either wise or noble grounds of action. They question if it be wise to tell people that you will do for them, out of fear of their power, what you have left undone, so long as your only motive was compassion for their weakness and their sorrows. And, if ignorance of everything which is needful a ruler should know is likely to do so much harm in the governing classes of the future, why is it, they ask reasonably enough,

<sup>2</sup>See 1 Samuel, iv, 21.



that such ignorance in the governing classes of the past has not been viewed with equal horror?

Compare the average artisan and the average country squire, and it may be doubted if you will find a pin to choose between the two in point of ignorance, class feeling, or prejudice. It is true that the ignorance is of a different sort—that the class feeling is in favor of a different class—and that the prejudice has a distinct savor of wrong-headedness in each case—but it is questionable if the one is either a bit better, or a bit worse, than the other. The old protectionist theory is the doctrine of trades unions as applied by the squires, and the modern trades unionism is the doctrine of the squires applied by the artisans. Why should we be worse off under one *régime* than under the other?

Again, this sceptical minority asks the clergy to think whether it is really want of education which keeps the masses away from their ministrations—whether the most completely educated men are not as open to reproach on this score as the workmen; and whether, perchance, this may not indicate that it is not education which lies at the bottom of the matter?

Once more, these people, whom there is no pleasing, venture to doubt whether the glory which rests upon being able to undersell all the rest of the world, is a very safe kind of glory—whether we may not purchase it too dear; especially if we allow education, which ought to be directed to the making men, to be diverted into a process of manufacturing human tools, wonderfully adroit in the exercise of some technical industry, but good for nothing else.

And, finally, these people inquire whether it is the masses alone who need a reformed and improved education. They ask whether the richest of our public schools might not well be made to supply knowledge, as well as gentlemanly habits, a strong class feeling, and eminent proficiency in cricket. They seem to think that the noble foundations of our old universities are hardly fulfilling their functions in their present posture of half-clerical seminaries, half racecourses, where men are trained to win a senior wranglership, or a double-first,<sup>1</sup> as horses are trained to win a

cup, with as little reference to the needs of after-life in the case of a man as in that of the racer. And, while as zealous for education as the rest, they affirm that, if the education of the richer classes were such as to fit them to be the leaders and the governors of the poorer; and, if the education of the poorer classes were such as to enable them to appreciate really wise guidance and good governance, the politicians need not fear mob-law, nor the clergy lament their want of flocks, nor the capitalists prognosticate the annihilation of the prosperity of the country.

Such is the diversity of opinion upon the why and the wherefore of education. And my hearers will be prepared to expect that the practical recommendations which are put forward are not less discordant. There is a loud cry for compulsory education. We English, in spite of constant experience to the contrary, preserve a touching faith in the efficacy of acts of Parliament; and I believe we should have compulsory education in the course of next session, if there were the least probability that half a dozen leading statesmen of different parties would agree what that education should be.

Some hold that education without theology is worse than none. Others maintain, quite as strongly, that education with theology is in the same predicament. But this is certain, that those who hold the first opinion can by no means agree what theology should be taught; and that those who maintain the second are in a small minority.

At any rate "make people learn to read, write, and cipher," say a great many; and the advice is undoubtedly sensible as far as it goes. But, as has happened to me in former days, those who, in despair of getting anything better, advocate this measure, are met with the objection that it is very like making a child practice the use of a knife, fork, and spoon, without giving it a particle of meat. I really don't know what reply is to be made to such an objection.

But it would be unprofitable to spend more time in disentangling, or rather in showing up the knots in, the raveled skeins of our neighbors. Much more to the purpose is it to ask if we possess any clue of our own which may guide us among these entanglements. And by way of a beginning, let us ask ourselves—What is education? Above all things,

<sup>1</sup>Names indicating high honors in scholarship at Cambridge and Oxford.



what is our ideal of a thoroughly liberal education?—of that education which, if we could begin life again, we would give ourselves—of that education which, if we could mold the fates to our own will, we would give our children? Well, I know not what may be your conceptions upon this matter, but I will tell you mine, and I hope I shall find that our views are not very discrepant.

Suppose it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game of chess. Don't you think that we should all consider it to be a primary duty to learn at least the names and the moves of the pieces; to have a notion of a gambit, and a keen eye for all the means of giving and getting out of check? Do you not think that we should look with a disapprobation amounting to scorn, upon the father who allowed his son, or the state which allowed its members, to grow up without knowing a pawn from a knight?

Yet it is a very plain and elementary truth that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and, more or less, of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well, the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill is checkmated—without haste, but without remorse.

My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Retzsch<sup>1</sup> has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel who is playing for love, as we say, and would

rather lose than win—and I should accept it as an image of human life.

Well, what I mean by education is learning the rules of this mighty game. In other words, education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. For me, education means neither more nor less than this. Anything which professes to call itself education must be tried by this standard, and if it fails to stand the test, I will not call it education, whatever may be the force of authority, or of numbers, upon the other side.

It is important to remember that, in strictness, there is no such thing as an uneducated man. Take an extreme case. Suppose that an adult man, in the full vigor of his faculties, could be suddenly placed in the world, as Adam is said to have been, and then left to do as he best might. How long would he be left uneducated? Not five minutes. Nature would begin to teach him, through the eye, the ear, the touch, the properties of objects. Pain and pleasure would be at his elbow telling him to do this and avoid that; and by slow degrees the man would receive an education which, if narrow, would be thorough, real, and adequate to his circumstances, though there would be no extras and very few accomplishments.

And if to this solitary man entered a second Adam, or, better still, an Eve, a new and greater world, that of social and moral phenomena, would be revealed. Joys and woes, compared with which all others might seem but faint shadows, would spring from the new relations. Happiness and sorrow would take the place of the coarser monitors, pleasure and pain; but conduct would still be shaped by the observation of the natural consequences of actions; or, in other words, by the laws of the nature of man.

To every one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then, long before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, Nature took us in hand, and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence, shaping our actions into rough accordance with Nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too

<sup>1</sup>Moritz Retzsch (1779–1857), German painter.

gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past for any one, be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day, and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And Nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university, the universe, of which we are all members—Nature having no Test-Acts.<sup>1</sup>

Those who take honors in Nature's university, who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them, are the really great and successful men in this world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll,"<sup>2</sup> who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are plucked;<sup>3</sup> and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as Nature is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of Nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as willful disobedience—incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first; but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education—that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as artificial education—is to make good these defects in Nature's methods; to prepare the child to receive Nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with willful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her pleasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural education. And a liberal education is an artificial education which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards, which

Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all villainess, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely: she as his ever beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter.

Where is such an education as this to be had? Where is there any approximation to it? Has any one tried to found such an education? Looking over the length and breadth of these islands, I am afraid that all these questions must receive a negative answer.<sup>4</sup>

## SCIENCE AND CULTURE<sup>5</sup>

Six years ago, as some of my present hearers may remember, I had the privilege of addressing a large assemblage of the inhabitants of this city, who had gathered together to do honor to the memory of their famous townsman, Joseph Priestley;<sup>6</sup> and, if any satisfac-

<sup>1</sup>The name given to English laws requiring assent to the doctrines of the Church of England before one might hold public office or receive a university degree. Such a law concerning university degrees was still in force when Huxley delivered this address, though it was repealed three years later (1871).

<sup>2</sup>*i.e.*, the students who get degrees without honors. "Poll" is a Cambridge-University slang term, derived from Greek *οἱ πολλοί*, the many, the rabble.

<sup>3</sup>Rejected for deficiency.

<sup>4</sup>In the remainder of this address, not here printed, Huxley discussed English education as it was in the eighteen-sixties, with the aim of showing how far from "liberal" it was.

<sup>5</sup>An address delivered at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's Science College at Birmingham on 1 October, 1880; later published in *Science and Education* (Collected Essays, Vol. III).

<sup>6</sup>Scientist, theologian, and political theorist (1733-1804). Because of his sympathy with the French Revolution, Priestley was attacked by a mob in 1791, his house was broken into and burned, and his instruments and manuscripts destroyed.

tion attaches to posthumous glory, we may hope that the *manes*<sup>1</sup> of the burnt-out philosopher were then finally appeased.

No man, however, who is endowed with a fair share of common sense, and not more than a fair share of vanity, will identify either contemporary or posthumous fame with the highest good; and Priestley's life leaves no doubt that he, at any rate, set a much higher value upon the advancement of knowledge, and the promotion of that freedom of thought which is at once the cause and the consequence of intellectual progress.

Hence I am disposed to think that, if Priestley could be amongst us to-day, the occasion of our meeting would afford him even greater pleasure than the proceedings which celebrated the centenary of his chief discovery.<sup>2</sup> The kindly heart would be moved, the high sense of social duty would be satisfied, by the spectacle of well-earned wealth neither squandered in tawdry luxury and vainglorious show, nor scattered with the careless charity which blesses neither him that gives nor him that takes, but expended in the execution of a well-considered plan for the aid of present and future generations of those who are willing to help themselves.

We shall all be of one mind thus far. But it is needful to share Priestley's keen interest in physical science; and to have learned, as he had learned, the value of scientific training in fields of inquiry apparently far remote from physical science; in order to appreciate, as he would have appreciated, the value of the noble gift which Sir Josiah Mason has bestowed upon the inhabitants of the Midland district.

For us children of the nineteenth century, however, the establishment of a college under the conditions of Sir Josiah Mason's Trust, has a significance apart from any which it could have possessed a hundred years ago. It appears to be an indication that we are reaching the crisis of the battle, or rather of the long series of battles, which have been fought over education in a campaign which began long before Priestley's time, and will probably not be finished just yet.

In the last century, the combatants were the champions of ancient literature on the

one side, and those of modern literature on the other; but, some thirty years<sup>3</sup> ago, the contest became complicated by the appearance of a third army, ranged round the banner of physical science.

I am not aware that any one has authority to speak in the name of this new host. For it must be admitted to be somewhat of a guerilla force, composed largely of irregulars, each of whom fights pretty much for his own hand. But the impressions of a full private, who has seen a good deal of service in the ranks, respecting the present position of affairs and the conditions of a permanent peace, may not be devoid of interest; and I do not know that I could make a better use of the present opportunity than by laying them before you.

From the time that the first suggestion to introduce physical science into ordinary education was timidly whispered, until now, the advocates of scientific education have met with opposition of two kinds. On the one hand, they have been pooh-poohed by the men of business who pride themselves on being the representatives of practicality; while, on the other hand, they have been excommunicated by the classical scholars, in their capacity of Levites in charge of the ark of culture<sup>4</sup> and monopolists of liberal education.

The practical men believed that the idol whom they worship—rule of thumb—has been the source of the past prosperity, and will suffice for the future welfare of the arts and manufactures. They were of opinion that science is speculative rubbish; that theory and practice have nothing to do with one another; and that the scientific habit of mind is an impediment, rather than an aid, in the conduct of ordinary affairs.

I have used the past tense in speaking of the practical men—for although they were very formidable thirty years ago, I am not sure that the pure species has not been extirpated. In fact, so far as mere argument goes, they have been subjected to such a *feu d'enfer*<sup>5</sup> that it is a miracle if any have escaped. But I have remarked that your typical practical man has an unexpected resemblance to

<sup>1</sup>Ancestral spirits.

<sup>2</sup>Priestley was the discoverer of oxygen, and announced his discovery in 1774.

<sup>3</sup>The advocacy of the introduction of physical science into general education by George Combe and others commenced a good deal earlier; but the movement had acquired hardly any practical force before the time to which I refer (Huxley's note).

<sup>4</sup>See Numbers, iii, 14-32.

<sup>5</sup>Furious fire.



one of Milton's angels. His spiritual wounds, such as are inflicted by logical weapons, may be as deep as a well and as wide as a church door, but beyond shedding a few drops of ichor, celestial or otherwise, he is no whit the worse.<sup>1</sup> So, if any of these opponents be left, I will not waste time in vain repetition of the demonstrative evidence of the practical value of science; but knowing that a parable will sometimes penetrate where syllogisms fail to effect an entrance, I will offer a story for their consideration.

Once upon a time, a boy,<sup>2</sup> with nothing to depend upon but his own vigorous nature, was thrown into the thick of the struggle for existence in the midst of a great manufacturing population. He seems to have had a hard fight, inasmuch as, by the time he was thirty years of age, his total disposable funds amounted to twenty pounds. Nevertheless, middle life found him giving proof of his comprehension of the practical problems he had been roughly called upon to solve, by a career of remarkable prosperity.

Finally, having reached old age with its well-earned surroundings of "honor, troops of friends,"<sup>3</sup> the hero of my story bethought himself of those who were making a like start in life, and how he could stretch out a helping hand to them.

After long and anxious reflection this successful practical man of business could devise nothing better than to provide them with the means of obtaining "sound, extensive, and practical scientific knowledge."<sup>4</sup> And he devoted a large part of his wealth and five years of incessant work to this end.

I need not point the moral of a tale which, as the solid and spacious fabric of the Scientific College assures us, is no fable, nor can anything which I could say intensify the force of this practical answer to practical objections.

We may take it for granted then, that, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, the diffusion of thorough scientific education is an absolutely essential condition of industrial progress; and that the college which has been opened to-day will confer an inestimable boon upon those whose livelihood is to be gained by the practice of the arts and manufactures of the district.

The only question worth discussion is, whether the conditions, under which the work of the college is to be carried out, are such as to give it the best possible chance of achieving permanent success.

Sir Josiah Mason, without doubt most wisely, has left very large freedom of action to the trustees, to whom he proposes ultimately to commit the administration of the college, so that they may be able to adjust its arrangements in accordance with the changing conditions of the future. But, with respect to three points, he has laid most explicit injunctions upon both administrators and teachers.

Party politics are forbidden to enter into the minds of either, so far as the work of the college is concerned; theology is as sternly banished from its precincts; and finally, it is especially declared that the college shall make no provision for "mere literary instruction and education."

It does not concern me at present to dwell upon the first two injunctions any longer than may be needful to express my full conviction of their wisdom. But the third prohibition brings us face to face with those other opponents of scientific education, who are by no means in the moribund condition of the practical man, but alive, alert, and formidable.

It is not impossible that we shall hear this express exclusion of "literary instruction and education" from a college which, nevertheless, professes to give a high and efficient education, sharply criticized. Certainly the time was that the Levites of culture would have sounded their trumpets against its walls as against an educational Jericho.<sup>5</sup>

How often have we not been told that the study of physical science is incompetent to confer culture; that it touches none of the higher problems of life; and, what is worse, that the continual devotion to scientific studies tends to generate a narrow and bigoted belief in the applicability of scientific methods to the search after truth of all kinds? How frequently one has reason to observe that no reply to a troublesome argument tells so well as calling its author a "mere scientific specialist." And, as I am afraid it is not permissible to speak of this form of opposition to scientific education in

<sup>1</sup>See *Paradise Lost*, VI, 327 and following lines.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Josiah Mason (1795-1881).

<sup>3</sup>*Macbeth*, V, iii, 25. <sup>4</sup>Quoted from Mason.

<sup>5</sup>See *Joshua*, vi.

the past tense, may we not expect to be told that this, not only omission, but prohibition, of "mere literary instruction and education" is a patent example of scientific narrow-mindedness?

I am not acquainted with Sir Josiah Mason's reasons for the action which he has taken; but if, as I apprehend is the case, he refers to the ordinary classical course of our schools and universities by the name of "mere literary instruction and education," I venture to offer sundry reasons of my own in support of that action.

For I hold very strongly by two convictions—The first is, that neither the discipline nor the subject-matter of classical education is of such direct value to the student of physical science as to justify the expenditure of valuable time upon either; and the second is, that for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education.

I need hardly point out to you that these opinions, especially the latter, are diametrically opposed to those of the great majority of educated Englishmen, influenced as they are by school and university traditions. In their belief, culture is obtainable only by a liberal education; and a liberal education is synonymous, not merely with education and instruction in literature, but in one particular form of literature, namely, that of Greek and Roman antiquity. They hold that the man who has learned Latin and Greek, however little, is educated; while he who is versed in other branches of knowledge, however deeply, is a more or less respectable specialist, not admissible into the cultured caste. The stamp of the educated man, the university degree, is not for him.

I am too well acquainted with the generous catholicity of spirit, the true sympathy with scientific thought, which pervades the writings of our chief apostle of culture<sup>1</sup> to identify him with these opinions; and yet one may cull from one and another of those epistles to the Philistines, which so much delight all who do not answer to that name, sentences which lend them some support.

Mr. Arnold tells us that the meaning of cul-

ture is "to know the best that has been thought and said in the world."<sup>2</sup> It is the criticism of life contained in literature. That criticism regards "Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their common outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this program. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?"<sup>3</sup>

We have here to deal with two distinct propositions. The first, that a criticism of life is the essence of culture; the second, that literature contains the materials which suffice for the construction of such criticism.

I think that we must all assent to the first proposition. For culture certainly means something quite different from learning or technical skill. It implies the possession of an ideal, and the habit of critically estimating the value of things by comparison with a theoretic standard. Perfect culture should supply a complete theory of life, based upon a clear knowledge alike of its possibilities and of its limitations.

But we may agree to all this, and yet strongly dissent from the assumption that literature alone is competent to supply this knowledge. After having learned all that Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity have thought and said, and all that modern literatures have to tell us, it is not self-evident that we have laid a sufficiently broad and deep foundation for that criticism of life which constitutes culture.

Indeed, to any one acquainted with the scope of physical science, it is not at all evident. Considering progress only in the "intellectual and spiritual sphere," I find myself wholly unable to admit that either

<sup>1</sup>Matthew Arnold. Philistine is the word Arnold used to designate the English middle class—children of darkness, as he thought, either opposed to true enlightenment or seeking it in wrong ways.

<sup>2</sup>This, repeated many times by Arnold, is to be found with slight variations in a number of his books or essays. For the development of his definition of culture see *Culture and Anarchy*.

<sup>3</sup>*Essays in Criticism* (Huxley's note; the passage quoted is from the essay entitled *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*, printed below).

nations or individuals will really advance, if their common outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical science. I should say that an army, without weapons of precision and with no particular base of operations, might more hopefully enter upon a campaign on the Rhine, than a man, devoid of a knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, upon a criticism of life.

When a biologist meets with an anomaly, he instinctively turns to the study of development to clear it up. The rationale of contradictory opinions may with equal confidence be sought in history.

It is, happily, no new thing that Englishmen should employ their wealth in building and endowing institutions for educational purposes. But, five or six hundred years ago, deeds of foundation expressed or implied conditions as nearly as possible contrary to those which have been thought expedient by Sir Josiah Mason. That is to say, physical science was practically ignored, while a certain literary training was enjoined as a means to the acquirement of knowledge which was essentially theological.

The reason of this singular contradiction between the actions of men alike animated by a strong and disinterested desire to promote the welfare of their fellows, is easily discovered.

At that time, in fact, if any one desired knowledge beyond such as could be obtained by his own observation, or by common conversation, his first necessity was to learn the Latin language, inasmuch as all the higher knowledge of the western world was contained in works written in that language. Hence, Latin grammar, with logic and rhetoric, studied through Latin, were the fundamentals of education. With respect to the substance of the knowledge imparted through this channel, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, as interpreted and supplemented by the Romish Church, were held to contain a complete and infallibly true body of information.

Theological dicta were, to the thinkers of those days, that which the axioms and definitions of Euclid are to the geometers of these. The business of the philosophers of the middle ages was to deduce from the data furnished by the theologians, conclusions in accordance with ecclesiastical decrees. They

were allowed the high privilege of showing, by logical process, how and why that which the Church said was true, must be true. And if their demonstrations fell short of or exceeded this limit, the Church was maternally ready to check their aberrations; if need were by the help of the secular arm.

Between the two, our ancestors were furnished with a compact and complete criticism of life. They were told how the world began and how it would end; they learned that all material existence was but a base and insignificant blot upon the fair face of the spiritual world, and that nature was, to all intents and purposes, the playground of the devil; they learned that the earth is the center of the visible universe, and that man is the cynosure of things terrestrial; and more especially was it inculcated that the course of nature had no fixed order, but that it could be, and constantly was, altered by the agency of innumerable spiritual beings, good and bad, according as they were moved by the deeds and prayers of men. The sum and substance of the whole doctrine was to produce the conviction that the only thing really worth knowing in this world was how to secure that place in a better which, under certain conditions, the Church promised.

Our ancestors had a living belief in this theory of life, and acted upon it in their dealings with education, as in all other matters. Culture meant saintliness—after the fashion of the saints of those days; the education that led to it was, of necessity, theological; and the way to theology lay through Latin.

That the study of nature—further than was requisite for the satisfaction of everyday wants—should have any bearing on human life was far from the thoughts of men thus trained. Indeed, as nature had been cursed for man's sake, it was an obvious conclusion that those who meddled with nature were likely to come into pretty close contact with Satan. And, if any born scientific investigator followed his instincts, he might safely reckon upon earning the reputation, and probably upon suffering the fate, of a sorcerer.

Had the western world been left to itself in Chinese isolation, there is no saying how long this state of things might have endured. But, happily, it was not left to itself. Even earlier than the thirteenth century, the



development of Moorish civilization in Spain and the great movement of the Crusades had introduced the leaven which, from that day to this, has never ceased to work. At first, through the intermediation of Arabic translations, afterwards by the study of the originals, the western nations of Europe became acquainted with the writings of the ancient philosophers and poets, and, in time, with the whole of the vast literature of antiquity.

Whatever there was of high intellectual aspiration or dominant capacity in Italy, France, Germany, and England, spent itself for centuries in taking possession of the rich inheritance left by the dead civilizations of Greece and Rome. Marvelously aided by the invention of printing, classical learning spread and flourished. Those who possessed it prided themselves on having attained the highest culture then within the reach of mankind.

And justly. For, saving Dante on his solitary pinnacle, there was no figure in modern literature at the time of the Renaissance to compare with the men of antiquity; there was no art to compete with their sculpture; there was no physical science but that which Greece had created. Above all, there was no other example of perfect intellectual freedom—of the unhesitating acceptance of reason as the sole guide to truth and the supreme arbiter of conduct.

The new learning necessarily soon exerted a profound influence upon education. The language of the monks and schoolmen<sup>1</sup> seemed little better than gibberish to scholars fresh from Virgil and Cicero, and the study of Latin was placed upon a new foundation. Moreover, Latin itself ceased to afford the sole key to knowledge. The student who sought the highest thought of antiquity, found only a second-hand reflection of it in Roman literature, and turned his face to the full light of the Greeks. And after a battle, not altogether dissimilar to that which is at present being fought over the teaching of physical science, the study of Greek was recognized as an essential element of all higher education.

Thus the Humanists, as they were called, won the day; and the great reform which they effected was of incalculable service to mankind. But the Nemesis of all reformers

is finality; and the reformers of education, like those of religion, fell into the profound, however common, error of mistaking the beginning for the end of the work of reformation.

The representatives of the Humanists, in the nineteenth century, take their stand upon classical education as the sole avenue to culture, as firmly as if we were still in the age of Renaissance. Yet, surely the present intellectual relations of the modern and the ancient worlds are profoundly different from those which obtained three centuries ago. Leaving aside the existence of a great and characteristically modern literature, of modern painting, and, especially, of modern music, there is one feature of the present state of the civilized world which separates it more widely from the Renaissance than the Renaissance was separated from the middle ages.

This distinctive character of our own times lies in the vast and constantly increasing part which is played by natural knowledge. Not only is our daily life shaped by it, not only does the prosperity of millions of men depend upon it, but our whole theory of life has long been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the general conceptions of the universe which have been forced upon us by physical science.

In fact, the most elementary acquaintance with the results of scientific investigation shows us that they offer a broad and striking contradiction to the opinion so implicitly credited and taught in the middle ages.

The notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes, and that the chief business of mankind is to learn that order and govern themselves accordingly. Moreover this scientific "criticism of life" presents itself to us with different credentials from any other. It appeals not to authority, nor to what anybody may have thought or said, but to nature. It admits that all our interpretations of natural fact are more or less imperfect and symbolic, and bids the learner seek for truth not among words but among things. It warns us that

<sup>1</sup>Scholastic philosophers of the Middle Age.

the assertion which outstrips evidence is not only a blunder but a crime.

The purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the Humanists in our day, gives no inkling of all this. A man may be a better scholar than Erasmus,<sup>1</sup> and know no more of the chief causes of the present intellectual fermentation than Erasmus did. Scholarly and pious persons, worthy of all respect, favor us with allocutions upon the sadness of the antagonism of science to their medieval way of thinking, which betray an ignorance of the first principles of scientific investigation, an incapacity for understanding what a man of science means by veracity, and an unconsciousness of the weight of established scientific truths, which is almost comical.

There is no great force in the *tu quoque*<sup>2</sup> argument, or else the advocates of scientific education might fairly enough retort upon the modern Humanists that they may be learned specialists, but that they possess no such sound foundation for a criticism of life as deserves the name of culture. And, indeed, if we were disposed to be cruel, we might urge that the Humanists have brought this reproach upon themselves, not because they are too full of the spirit of the ancient Greek, but because they lack it.

The period of the Renaissance is commonly called that of the "Revival of Letters," as if the influences then brought to bear upon the mind of Western Europe had been wholly exhausted in the field of literature. I think it is very commonly forgotten that the revival of science, effected by the same agency, although less conspicuous, was not less momentous.

In fact, the few and scattered students of that day picked up the clue to her secrets exactly as it fell from the hands of the Greeks a thousand years before. The foundations of mathematics were so well laid by them, that our children learn their geometry from a book written for the schools of Alexandria two thousand years ago.<sup>3</sup> Modern astronomy is the natural continuation and development of the work of Hipparchus and of Ptolemy;

modern physics of that of Democritus and of Archimedes; it was long before modern biological science outgrew the knowledge bequeathed to us by Aristotle, by Theophrastus, and by Galen.

We cannot know all the best thoughts and sayings of the Greeks unless we know what they thought about natural phenomena. We cannot fully apprehend their criticism of life unless we understand the extent to which that criticism was affected by scientific conceptions. We falsely pretend to be the inheritors of their culture, unless we are penetrated, as the best minds among them were, with an unhesitating faith that the free employment of reason, in accordance with scientific method, is the sole method of reaching truth.

Thus I venture to think that the pretensions of our modern Humanists to the possession of the monopoly of culture and to the exclusive inheritance of the spirit of antiquity must be abated, if not abandoned. But I should be very sorry that anything I have said should be taken to imply a desire on my part to depreciate the value of classical education, as it might be and as it sometimes is. The native capacities of mankind vary no less than their opportunities; and while culture is one, the road by which one man may best reach it is widely different from that which is most advantageous to another. Again, while scientific education is yet inchoate and tentative, classical education is thoroughly well organized upon the practical experience of generations of teachers. So that, given ample time for learning and estimation for ordinary life, or for a literary career, I do not think that a young Englishman in search of culture can do better than follow the course usually marked out for him, supplementing its deficiencies by his own efforts.

But for those who mean to make science their serious occupation; or who intend to follow the profession of medicine; or who have to enter early upon the business of life; for all these, in my opinion, classical education is a mistake; and it is for this reason that I am glad to see "mere literary education and instruction" shut out from the curriculum of Sir Josiah Mason's College, seeing that its inclusion would probably lead to the introduction of the ordinary smattering of Latin and Greek.

Nevertheless, I am the last person to ques-

<sup>1</sup>One of the most famous of the humanists, or classical scholars, of the Renaissance. He was born at Rotterdam probably in 1465, and died at Basel, Switzerland, in 1536.

<sup>2</sup>You also.

<sup>3</sup>I.e., from Euclid's *Elements*.



tion the importance of genuine literary education, or to suppose that intellectual culture can be complete without it. An exclusively scientific training will bring about a mental twist as surely as an exclusively literary training. The value of the cargo does not compensate for a ship's being out of trim; and I should be very sorry to think that the Scientific College would turn out none but lopsided men.

There is no need, however, that such a catastrophe should happen. Instruction in English, French, and German is provided, and thus the three greatest literatures of the modern world are made accessible to the student.

French and German, and especially the latter language, are absolutely indispensable to those who desire full knowledge in any department of science. But even supposing that the knowledge of these languages acquired is not more than sufficient for purely scientific purposes, every Englishman has, in his native tongue, an almost perfect instrument of literary expression; and, in his own literature, models of every kind of literary excellence. If an Englishman cannot get literary culture out of his Bible, his Shakespeare, his Milton, neither, in my belief, will the profoundest study of Homer and Sophocles, Virgil and Horace, give it to him.

Thus, since the constitution of the college makes sufficient provision for literary as well as for scientific education, and since artistic instruction is also contemplated, it seems to me that a fairly complete culture is offered to all who are willing to take advantage of it.

But I am not sure that at this point the "practical" man, scotched but not slain, may ask what all this talk about culture has to do with an institution, the object of which is defined to be "to promote the prosperity of the manufactures and the industry of the country." He may suggest that what is wanted for this end is not culture, nor even a purely scientific discipline, but simply a knowledge of applied science.

I often wish that this phrase, "applied science," had never been invented. For it suggests that there is a sort of scientific knowledge of direct practical use, which can be studied apart from another sort of scientific knowledge, which is of no practical utility,

and which is termed "pure science." But there is no more complete fallacy than this. What people call applied science is nothing but the application of pure science to particular classes of problems. It consists of deductions from those general principles, established by reasoning and observation, which constitute pure science. No one can safely make these deductions until he has a firm grasp of the principles; and he can obtain that grasp only by personal experience of the operations of observation and of reasoning on which they are founded.

Almost all the processes employed in the arts and manufactures fall within the range either of physics or of chemistry. In order to improve them, one must thoroughly understand them; and no one has a chance of really understanding them, unless he has obtained that mastery of principles and that habit of dealing with facts, which is given by long-continued and well-directed purely scientific training in the physical and the chemical laboratory. So that there really is no question as to the necessity of purely scientific discipline, even if the work of the college were limited by the narrowest interpretation of its stated aims.

And, as to the desirableness of a wider culture than that yielded by science alone, it is to be recollected that the improvement of manufacturing processes is only one of the conditions which contribute to the prosperity of industry. Industry is a means and not an end; and mankind work only to get something which they want. What that something is depends partly on their innate, and partly on their acquired, desires.

If the wealth resulting from prosperous industry is to be spent upon the gratification of unworthy desires, if the increasing perfection of manufacturing processes is to be accompanied by an increasing debasement of those who carry them on, I do not see the good of industry and prosperity.

Now it is perfectly true that men's views of what is desirable depend upon their characters; and that the innate proclivities to which we give that name are not touched by any amount of instruction. But it does not follow that even mere intellectual education may not, to an indefinite extent, modify the practical manifestation of the characters of men in their actions, by supplying them with



motives unknown to the ignorant. A pleasure-loving character will have pleasure of some sort; but, if you give him the choice, he may prefer pleasures which do not degrade him to those which do. And this choice is offered to every man, who possesses in literary or artistic culture a never-failing source of pleasures, which are neither withered by age, nor staled by custom, nor embittered in the recollection by the pangs of self-reproach.

If the institution opened to-day fulfills the intention of its founder, the picked intelligences among all classes of the population of this district will pass through it. No child born in Birmingham, henceforward, if he have the capacity to profit by the opportunities offered to him, first in the primary and other schools, and afterwards in the Scientific College, need fail to obtain, not merely the instruction, but the culture most appropriate to the conditions of his life.

Within these walls, the future employer and the future artisan may sojourn together for a while, and carry, through all their lives, the stamp of the influences then brought to bear upon them. Hence, it is not beside the mark to remind you, that the prosperity of industry depends not merely upon the improvement of manufacturing processes, not merely upon the ennobling of the individual character, but upon a third condition, namely, a clear understanding of the conditions of social life, on the part of both the capitalist and the operative, and their agreement upon common principles of social action. They must learn that social phenomena are as much the expression of natural laws as any others; that no social arrangements can be permanent unless they harmonize with the requirements of social statics and dynamics; and that, in

the nature of things, there is an arbiter whose decisions execute themselves.

But this knowledge is only to be obtained by the application of the methods of investigation adopted in physical researches to the investigation of the phenomena of society. Hence, I confess, I should like to see one addition made to the excellent scheme of education propounded for the college, in the shape of provision for the teaching of sociology. For though we are all agreed that party politics are to have no place in the instruction of the college; yet in this country, practically governed as it is now by universal suffrage, every man who does his duty must exercise political functions. And, if the evils which are inseparable from the good of political liberty are to be checked, if the perpetual oscillation of nations between anarchy and despotism is to be replaced by the steady march of self-restraining freedom; it will be because men will gradually bring themselves to deal with political, as they now deal with scientific questions; to be as ashamed of undue haste and partisan prejudice in the one case as in the other; and to believe that the machinery of society is at least as delicate as that of a spinning-jenny, and as little likely to be improved by the meddling of those who have not taken the trouble to master the principles of its action.

In conclusion, I am sure that I make myself the mouthpiece of all present in offering to the venerable founder of the institution, which now commences its beneficent career, our congratulations on the completion of his work; and in expressing the conviction, that the remotest posterity will point to it as a crucial instance of the wisdom which natural piety leads all men to ascribe to their ancestors.

## DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828-1882)

Rossetti was the eldest son of Gabriele Rossetti and Mary Lavinia Polidori, and was born in London on 12 May, 1828. Gabriele Rossetti was a native of the Kingdom of Naples, where he had been Curator of Antiquities in the Naples Museum, but he had had to flee from that country because of his share in the insurrectionary movements of 1820 and 1821. He had come to England in 1824, where he was for many years Professor of Italian in King's College, London. The environment of his home early stimulated Dante Gabriel Rossetti's powers, and he was writing poetry at the age of five or six. At nine he began attending lectures at King's College, where he remained until he was fourteen. This was the extent of his formal education, though extensive reading done at home was of great importance in his development. When he left King's College in 1842 he determined that painting was to be his profession and for the next six years he studied drawing at Cary's Drawing Academy and in the antique class of the Royal Academy. In this work he did not make remarkable progress, partly because then, as later, he was impatient for great results and tended to neglect the slow and tiresome drudgery necessary for a thorough foundation in drawing. He also began in this period the writing of poetry, some of his translations from Dante and his contemporaries being made as early as 1845, and several of his most remarkable poems, notably *The Blessed Damozel*, being written about 1847. In 1848 Rossetti applied to Ford Madox Brown for instruction, and this proved a momentous step. Through Brown he was introduced to a group of young men who were feeling their way to a new movement in art, resolving to abandon the conventionalities inherited from the eighteenth century and to revive the detailed elaboration and mystical interpretation of nature that characterized early medieval art. The best known of these are Woolner, Holman Hunt, and Millais, and they formed themselves, with Brown, Rossetti, and others, into the so-called Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The literary manifesto of the group was the *Germ*, four numbers of which appeared in 1850 under the editorship of William Michael Rossetti. In this *The Blessed Damozel* was printed and *Hand and Soul*, the only imaginative work in prose which D. G. Rossetti ever completed. About this time Rossetti fell in love with Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal, a milliner's assistant who was the daughter of a Sheffield cutler. He became engaged to her proba-

bly in 1851, and she served at this time and later as a model for many of his pictures, but Rossetti did not marry her until May, 1860, both because of his scanty means and because of her uncertain, delicate health. For several years Rossetti's income was increased by Ruskin, who not only defended the aims of the Pre-Raphaelite painters but made an arrangement, which lasted until after 1861, to purchase Rossetti's pictures. Ruskin also stood the expense of the publication of Rossetti's translations from the *Early Italian Poets* (in later editions entitled *Dante and His Circle*) in 1861. Another friend who was at this time useful to Rossetti was Sir Edward Burne-Jones, who introduced him to Swinburne, William Morris, and others, at Oxford.

When Rossetti married in 1860 it was obvious that his wife could not live long, because of the consumption which had attacked her. She died, however, even sooner than any one expected, in February, 1862, from an overdose of laudanum taken to relieve neuralgia. Rossetti characteristically expressed his grief by burying with her the manuscripts of his unpublished poems. And there they remained until the fall of 1869, when he consented to their disinterment. His *Collected Poems* were published in the following year and immediately secured for him a great reputation. The remainder of Rossetti's life, however, was a prolonged tragedy, owing to his addiction to the habit of taking chloral. This, in combination with his weak health, produced mental aberrations which made his life painful both to himself and to his friends. He continued at times, nevertheless, his work as a painter, and in the last years of his life wrote two of his greatest poems, the *White Ship* and the *King's Tragedy*. These and other poems were published under the title *Ballads and Sonnets* in 1881. In the following year Rossetti died at Birchington, near Margate, on 10 April.

Rossetti was, as Ruskin said, "the chief intellectual force in the establishment of the Modern Romantic School in England." This he was, alike in the fine arts and in poetry. In the latter his chief followers were William Morris and Swinburne. This school voiced a reaction in its own lesser, sensuous way from the materialism and ugliness of the growing industrial civilization of England, just as the earlier romantic writers of the beginning of the century had reacted against the skeptical rationalism of the eighteenth century.

SISTER HELEN<sup>1</sup>

"WHY did you melt your waxen man,  
Sister Helen?

To-day is the third since you began."

"The time was long, yet the time ran,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But if you have done your work aright,  
Sister Helen,

You'll let me play, for you said I might."

"Be very still in your play to-night,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven!)

"You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,  
Sister Helen;

If now it be molten, all is well."

"Even so,—nay, peace! you cannot tell,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
O what is this, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,  
Sister Helen;

How like dead folk he has dropped away!"

"Nay now, of the dead what can you say,  
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven?)

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,  
Sister Helen,

Shines through the thinned wax red as blood!"

"Nay now, when looked you yet on blood,  
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick and sore,  
Sister Helen,

And I'll play without the gallery door."

"Aye, let me rest,—I'll lie on the floor,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Here high up in the balcony,  
Sister Helen,

The moon flies face to face with me."

"Aye, look and say whatever you see,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,  
Sister Helen;

In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."

"Hush, heard you a horse-tread, as you spake,  
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,  
Sister Helen,

Three horsemen that ride terribly."

"Little brother, whence come the three,  
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Whence should they come, between Hell and Heaven?)

"They come by the hill-verge from Boyne  
Bar,

Sister Helen,  
And one draws nigh, but two are afar."

"Look, look, do you know them who they are,  
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Who should they be, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,  
Sister Helen,

For I know the white mane on the blast."

"The hour has come, has come at last,  
Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He has made a sign and called Halloo!

Sister Helen,  
And he says that he would speak with you."

"Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Why laughs she thus, between Hell and Heaven?)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry,  
Sister Helen,

That Keith of Ewern's like to die."

"And he and thou, and thou and I,  
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
And they and we, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,  
Sister Helen,

He sickened, and lies since then forlorn."

"For bridegroom's side is the bride a thorn,  
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and Heaven!)

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1853. The poem is founded on the belief, long and widely held, that if a wax or clay image were roasted the person whose name it bore would be melted or dried away by continual sickness.



"Three days and nights he has lain abed,  
     Sister Helen, 100  
 And he prays in torment to be dead."  
 "The thing may chance, if he have prayed,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother, 104  
*If he have prayed, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,  
     Sister Helen,  
 That you should take your curse away."  
 "My prayer was heard,—he need but pray,  
     Little brother!" 110  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"But he says, till you take back your ban,  
     Sister Helen,  
 His soul would pass, yet never can." 115  
 "Nay then, shall I slay a living man,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But he calls for ever on your name, 120  
     •Sister Helen,  
 And says that he melts before a flame."  
 "My heart for his pleasure fared the same,  
     Little brother."  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother, 125  
*Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,  
     Sister Helen,  
 For I know the white plume on the blast."  
 "The hour, the sweet hour I forecast, 130  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his horse,  
     Sister Helen; 135  
 But his words are drowned in the wind's  
     course."  
 "Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear perforce,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother, 139  
*What word now heard, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,  
     Sister Helen,  
 Is ever to see you ere he die."  
 "In all that his soul sees, there am I,  
     Little brother!" 145  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*The soul's one sight, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,<sup>1</sup>  
     Sister Helen,  
 And bids you mind the banks of Boyne." 150  
 "What else he broke will he ever join,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*No, never joined, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He yields you these and craves full fain, 155  
     Sister Helen,  
 You pardon him in his mortal pain."  
 "What else he took will he give again,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother, 160  
*Not twice to give, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He calls your name in an agony,  
     Sister Helen,  
 That even dead Love must weep to see."  
 "Hate, born of Love, is blind as he, 165  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Love turned to hate, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides fast,  
     Sister Helen, 170  
 For I know the white hair on the blast."  
 "The short short hour will soon be past,  
     Little Brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Will soon be past, between Hell and Heaven!*) 175

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,  
     Sister Helen,  
 But oh! his voice is sad and weak!"  
 "What here should the mighty Baron seek,  
     Little brother?" 180  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,  
     Sister Helen,  
 The body dies but the soul shall live." 185  
 "Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*As she forgives, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would rive, 190  
     Sister Helen,  
 To save his dear son's soul alive."  
 "Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother, 195  
*Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!*)

<sup>1</sup>The two had broken a coin, each keeping half as a pledge.

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,  
     Sister Helen,  
 To go with him for the love of God!"  
 "The way is long to his son's abode,  
     Little brother." 200  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 The way is long, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,  
     Sister Helen,  
 So darkly clad, I saw her not."  
 "See her now or never see aught,  
     Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What more to see, between Hell and Heaven?)* 210

"Her hood falls back, and the moon shines fair,  
     Sister Helen,  
 On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."  
 "Blest hour of my power and her despair,  
     Little brother!" 215  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Hour blest and banned, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride did glow,  
     Sister Helen,  
 'Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago." 220  
 "One morn for pride and three days for woe,  
     Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Three days, three nights, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Her clasped hands stretch from her bending  
 head,  
     Sister Helen;  
 With the loud wind's wail her sobs are wed."  
 "What wedding-strains hath her bridal-bed,  
     Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What strain but death's, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)* 230

"She may not speak, she sinks in a swoon,  
     Sister Helen,—  
 She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."  
 "Oh! might I but hear her soul's blithe tune,  
     Little brother!" 236  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"They've caught her to Westholm's saddle-  
 bow,  
     Sister Helen,  
 And her moonlit hair gleams white in its flow."  
 "Let it turn whiter than winter snow,  
     Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Woe-withered gold, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,  
     Sister Helen! 246  
 More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."  
 "No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,  
     Little brother!" 250  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 His dying knell, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,  
     Sister Helen;  
 Is it in the sky or in the ground?" 255  
 "Say, have they turned their horses round,  
     Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What would she more, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"They have raised the old man from his knee,  
     Sister Helen, 261  
 And they ride in silence hastily."  
 "More fast the naked soul doth flee,  
     Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 The naked soul, between Hell and Heaven!)* 265

"Flank to flank are the three steeds gone,  
     Sister Helen,  
 But the lady's dark steed goes alone."  
 "And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath flown,  
     Little brother." 271  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 The lonely ghost, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,  
     Sister Helen, 275  
 And weary sad they look by the hill."  
 "But he and I are sadder still,  
     Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!)* 280

"See, see, the wax has dropped from its place,  
     Sister Helen,  
 And the flames are winning up apace!"  
 "Yet here they burn but for a space,  
     Little brother!" 285  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Ah! what white thing at the door has crossed,  
     Sister Helen?  
 Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?" 290  
 "A soul that's lost as mine is lost,  
     Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven!)*

THE HOUSE OF LIFE<sup>1</sup>

## A SONNET-SEQUENCE

A SONNET is a moment's monument,—  
 Memorial from the Soul's eternity  
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that it  
     be,  
 Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,  
 Of its own arduous fullness reverent: 5  
     Carve it in ivory or in ebony,  
     As Day or Night may rule; and let Time see  
 Its flowering crest impearled and orient.

A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals  
 The soul,—its converse, to what Power 'tis  
     due:— 10  
 Whether for tribute to the august appeals  
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,  
 It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous  
     breath,  
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.

## PART I—YOUTH AND CHANGE

## 4. LOVESIGHT

WHEN do I see thee most, belovéd one?  
 When in the light the spirits of mine eyes  
 Before thy face, their altar, solemnize  
 The worship of that Love through thee made  
     known?  
 Or when in the dusk hours (we two alone), 5  
     Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies  
     Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,  
 And my soul only sees thy soul its own?

O love, my love! if I no more should see 9  
 Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,  
 Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—  
 How then should sound upon Life's darkening  
     slope  
 The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of  
     Hope,  
 The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

## 5. HEART'S HOPE

BY WHAT word's power, the key of paths  
     untrod,  
 Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,  
 Till parted waves of Song yield up the shore  
 Even as that sea which Israel crossed dry-  
     shod?<sup>2</sup>  
 For lo! in some poor rhythmic period, 5  
     Lady, I fain would tell how evermore

<sup>1</sup>Published in its final form in 1881. Rossetti began writing the sonnets as early as 1848. They were chiefly inspired by Elizabeth Siddal. The title of the sequence was drawn from the astrological division of the heavens into twelve "houses," the first and greatest of which was the "house of life."

<sup>2</sup>Exodus, xiv, 15-31.

Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor  
 Thee from myself, neither our love from God.

Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and thine,  
     would I

Draw from one loving heart such evidence 10  
 As to all hearts all things shall signify;  
 Tender as dawn's first hill-fire, and intense  
 As instantaneous penetrating sense,  
 In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs gone  
     by.

## 19. SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—  
 The finger-points look through like rosy  
     blooms:  
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams  
 and glooms  
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.  
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass, 5  
 Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge  
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-  
     hedge.  
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-  
     fly  
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the  
     sky;— 10  
 So this winged hour is dropped to us from  
     above.  
 Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,  
 This close-companioned inarticulate hour  
 When twofold silence was the song of love.

## 21. LOVE-SWEETNESS

SWEET dimness of her loosened hair's downfall  
 About thy face; her sweet hands round thy  
     head  
 In gracious fostering union garlanded;  
 Her tremulous smiles; her glances' sweet recall  
 Of love; her murmuring sighs memorial; 5  
 Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy kisses  
     shed  
 On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so led  
 Back to her mouth which answers there for  
     all:—

What sweeter than these things, except the  
     thing  
 In lacking which all these would lose their  
     sweet:— 10  
 The confident heart's still fervor: the swift  
     beat  
 And soft subsidence of the spirit's wing,  
 Then when it feels, in cloud-girt wayfaring,  
 The breath of kindred plumes against its  
     feet?



## 22. HEART'S HAVEN

SOMETIMES she is a child within mine arms,  
Cowering beneath dark wings that love  
must chase,—

With still tears showering and averted face,  
Inexplicably filled with faint alarms:

And oft from mine own spirit's hurtling harms  
I crave the refuge of her deep embrace,—  
Against all ills the fortified strong place  
And sweet reserve of sovereign counter-  
charms.

And Love, our light at night and shade at  
noon,

Lulls us to rest with songs, and turns away  
All shafts of shelterless tumultuous day.

Like the moon's growth, his face gleams  
through his tune;

And as soft waters warble to the moon,  
Our answering spirits chime one roundelay.

## 25. WINGED HOURS

EACH hour until we meet is as a bird  
That wings from far his gradual way along  
The rustling covert of my soul,—his song  
Still loudlier trilled through leaves more deeply  
stirred:

But at the hour of meeting, a clear word  
Is every note he sings, in Love's own tongue;  
Yet, Love, thou know'st the sweet strain  
suffers wrong,  
Full oft through our contending joys unheard.

What of that hour at last, when for her sake  
No wing may fly to me nor song may flow;  
When, wandering round my life unleased,  
I know

The bloodied feathers scattered in the brake,<sup>1</sup>  
And think how she, far from me, with like eyes  
Sees through the untuneful bough the wingless  
skies?

## 26. MID-RAPTURE

THOU lovely and beloved, thou my love;  
Whose kiss seems still the first; whose sum-  
moning eyes,

Even now, as for our love-world's new  
sunrise,

Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned above  
All modulation of the deep-bowered dove,

Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;  
Whose hand is like a sweet voice to control  
Those worn tired brows it hath the keeping  
of:—

What word can answer to thy word,—what  
gaze

To thine, which now absorbs within its  
sphere

My worshiping face, till I am mirrored there  
Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn rays?  
What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart can  
prove,

O lovely and beloved, O my love?

## 27. HEART'S COMPASS

SOMETIMES thou seem'st not as thyself alone,  
But as the meaning of all things that are;

A breathless wonder, shadowing forth afar  
Some heavenly solstice hushed and halcyon;<sup>2</sup>

Whose unstirred lips are music's visible tone;<sup>5</sup>  
Whose eyes the sun-gate of the soul unbar,

Being of its furthest fires oracular;—  
The evident heart of all life sown and mown.

Even such Love is; and is not thy name Love?  
Yea, by thy hand the Love-god rends apart

All gathering clouds of Night's ambiguous  
art;

Flings them far down, and sets thine eyes  
above;

And simply, as some gage of flower or glove,  
Stakes with a smile the world against thy  
heart.

## 34. THE DARK GLASS

NOT I myself know all my love for thee:  
How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh  
To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?  
Shall birth and death, and all dark names that  
be

As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,  
Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with  
spray;

And shall my sense pierce love,—the last  
relay

And ultimate outpost of eternity?

Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?

One murmuring shell he gathers from the  
sand,—

One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.  
Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest  
call

And veriest touch of powers primordial  
That any hour-girt life may understand.

## 36. LIFE-IN-LOVE

NOT in thy body is thy life at all,  
But in this lady's lips and hands and eyes;  
Through these she yields thee life that  
vivifies

What else were sorrow's servant and death's  
thrall.

<sup>1</sup>Thicket.

<sup>2</sup>Calm.

Look on thyself without her, and recall 5  
 The waste remembrance and forlorn surmise  
 That lived but in a dead-drawn breath of  
 sighs  
 O'er vanished hours and hours eventual.

Even so much life hath the poor tress of hair  
 Which, stored apart, is all love hath to show  
 For heart-beats and for fire-heats long ago;  
 Even so much life endures unknown, even  
 where, 12  
 'Mid change the changeless night environeth,  
 Lies all that golden hair undimmed in death.

### 55. STILLBORN LOVE

THE hour which might have been yet might  
 not be,  
 Which man's and woman's heart conceived  
 and bore  
 Yet whereof life was barren,—on what shore  
 Bides it the breaking of Time's weary sea?  
 Bondchild of all consummate joys set free, 5  
 It somewhere sighs and serves, and mute  
 before  
 The house of Love, hears through the echo-  
 ing door  
 His hours elect in choral consonancy.

But lo! what wedded souls now hand in hand  
 Together tread at last the immortal strand 10  
 With eyes where burning memory lights  
 love home?  
 Lo! how the little outcast hour has turned  
 And leaped to them and in their faces  
 yearned:—  
 "I am your child: O Parents, ye have  
 come!"

### 56, 57, 58. TRUE WOMAN

#### I. HERSELF

TO BE a sweetness more desired than Spring;  
 A bodily beauty more acceptable  
 Than the wild rose-tree's arch that crowns  
 the fell;<sup>1</sup>  
 To be an essence more environing<sup>2</sup>  
 Than wine's drained juice; a music ravishing 5  
 More than the passionate pulse of Philo-  
 mel;<sup>3</sup>—  
 To be all this 'neath one soft bosom's swell  
 That is the flower of life:—how strange a thing!

How strange a thing to be what Man can  
 know  
 But as a sacred secret! Heaven's own  
 screen 10  
 Hides her soul's purest depth and loveliest  
 glow;

Closely withheld, as all things most un-  
 seen,—  
 The wave-bowered pearl,—the heart-shaped  
 seal of green  
 That flecks the snowdrop underneath the  
 snow.

#### II. HER LOVE

SHE loves him; for her infinite soul is Love,  
 And he her lodestar. Passion in her is  
 A glass facing his fire, where the bright bliss  
 Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet move  
 That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to  
 prove, 5  
 And it shall turn, by instant contraries,  
 Ice to the moon; while her pure fire to his  
 For whom it burns, clings close i' the heart's  
 alcove.

Lo! they are one. With wifely breast to  
 breast  
 And circling arms, she welcomes all con-  
 mand 10  
 Of love,—her soul to answering ardors  
 fanned:  
 Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to rest,  
 Ah! who shall say she deems not loveliest  
 The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand?

#### III. HER HEAVEN

IF TO grow old in Heaven is to grow young,  
 (As the Seer<sup>4</sup> saw and said), then blest were  
 he  
 With youth for evermore, whose heaven  
 should be  
 True Woman, she whom these weak notes  
 have sung.  
 Here and hereafter,—choir-strains of her  
 tongue,— 5  
 Sky-spaces of her eyes,—sweet signs that flee  
 About her soul's immediate sanctuary,—  
 Were Paradise all uttermost worlds among.

The sunrise blooms and withers on the hill  
 Like any hillflower; and the noblest troth 10  
 Dies here to dust. Yet shall Heaven's  
 promise clothe  
 Even yet those lovers who have cherished still  
 This test for love:—in every kiss sealed fast  
 To feel the first kiss and forebode the last.

### PART II—CHANGE AND FATE

#### 63. INCLUSIVENESS

THE changing guests, each in a different mood,  
 Sit at the roadside table and arise:  
 And every life among them in likewise  
 Is a soul's board set daily with new food.

<sup>1</sup>Moor.

<sup>2</sup>Pervading.

<sup>3</sup>The nightingale.

<sup>4</sup>Swedenborg.

What man has bent o'er his son's sleep, to  
 brood<sup>5</sup>  
 How that face shall watch his when cold it  
 lies?—  
 Or thought, as his own mother kissed his  
 eyes,  
 Of what her kiss was when his father wooed?

May not this ancient room thou sitt'st in  
 dwell  
 In separate living souls for joy or pain? <sup>10</sup>  
 Nay, all its corners may be painted plain  
 Where Heaven shows pictures of some life  
 spent well,  
 And may be stamped, a memory all in vain  
 Upon the sight of lidless eyes in Hell.

## 65. KNOWN IN VAIN

As two whose love, first foolish, widening  
 scope,  
 Knows suddenly, to music high and soft,  
 The Holy of holies; who because they scoffed  
 Are now amazed with shame, nor dare to cope  
 With the whole truth aloud, lest heaven should  
 ope; <sup>5</sup>  
 Yet, at their meetings, laugh not as they  
 laughed  
 In speech; nor speak, at length; but sitting  
 oft  
 Together, within hopeless sight of hope  
 For hours are silent:—So it happeneth  
 When Work and Will awake too late, to  
 gaze <sup>10</sup>  
 After their life sailed by, and hold their breath.  
 Ah! who shall dare to search through what  
 sad maze  
 Thenceforth their incommunicable ways  
 Follow the desultory feet of Death?

## 66. THE HEART OF THE NIGHT

From child to youth; from youth to arduous  
 man;  
 From lethargy to fever of the heart;  
 From faithful life to dream-dowered days  
 apart;  
 From trust to doubt; from doubt to brink of  
 ban;<sup>1</sup>—  
 Thus much of change in one swift cycle ran <sup>5</sup>  
 Till now. Alas, the soul!—how soon must  
 she  
 Accept her primal immortality,—  
 The flesh resume its dust whence it began?

O Lord of work and peace! O Lord of life!  
 O Lord, the awful Lord of will! though late,

Even yet renew this soul with duteous  
 breath; <sup>11</sup>  
 That when the peace is garnered in from strife,  
 The work retrieved, the will regenerate,  
 This soul may see thy face, O Lord of  
 death!

## 67. THE LANDMARK

Was *that* the landmark? What,—the foolish  
 well  
 Whose wave, low down, I did not stoop to  
 drink,  
 But sat and flung the pebbles from its brink  
 In sport to send its imaged skies pell-mell,  
 (And mine own image, had I noted well!)—<sup>5</sup>  
 Was that my point of turning?—I had  
 thought  
 The stations of my course should rise un-  
 sought,  
 As altar-stone or ensigned citadel.

But lo! the path is missed, I must go back,  
 And thirst to drink when next I reach the  
 spring <sup>10</sup>  
 Which once I stained, which since may have  
 grown black.  
 Yet though no light be left nor bird now  
 sing  
 As here I turn, I'll thank God, hastening,  
 That the same goal is still on the same track.

## 71, 72, 73. THE CHOICE

I

EAT thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt die.  
 Surely the earth, that's wise being very old,  
 Needs not our help. Then loose me, love,  
 and hold  
 Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I  
 May pour for thee this golden wine, brim-high,  
 Till round the glass thy fingers glow like  
 gold. <sup>6</sup>  
 We'll drown all hours: thy song, while hours  
 are tolled,  
 Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing sky.  
 Now kiss, and think that there are really  
 those,  
 My own high-bosomed beauty, who in-  
 crease  
 Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose  
 our way! <sup>11</sup>  
 Through many years they toil; then on a  
 day  
 They die not,—for their life was death,—  
 but cease;  
 And round their narrow lips the mold falls  
 close.

<sup>1</sup>Hate.



## II

WATCH thou and fear; to-morrow thou shalt die.

Or art thou sure thou shalt have time for death?

Is not the day which God's word promiseth  
To come man knows not when? In yonder  
sky,

Now while we speak, the sun speeds forth: can  
I

Or thou assure him of his goal? God's  
breath

Even at this moment haply quickeneth  
The air to a flame; till spirits, always nigh  
Though screened and hid, shall walk the day-  
light here.

And dost thou prate of all that man shall do?

Canst thou, who hast but plagues, pre-  
sume to be

Glad in his gladness that comes after thee?

Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell?  
Go to:

Cover thy countenance, and watch, and fear.

## III

THINK thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt die.

Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon the  
shore,

Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is all  
gone o'er:

Up all his years, steeply, with strain and sigh,  
Man clomb until he touched the truth; and I, <sup>5</sup>

Even I, am he whom it was destined for."

How should this be? Art thou then so  
much more

Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst  
reap thereby?

Nay, come up hither. From this wave-  
washed mound <sup>9</sup>

Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me;  
Then reach on with thy thought till it be  
drowned.

Miles and miles distant though the last line  
be,

And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues  
beyond,—

Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is  
more sea.

## 82. HOARDED JOY

I SAID: "Nay, pluck not,—let the first fruit be:

Even as thou sayest, it is sweet and red,

But let it ripen still. The tree's bent head  
Sees in the stream its own fecundity

And bides the day of fullness. Shall not we <sup>5</sup>

At the sun's hour that day possess the shade,

And claim our fruit before its ripeness fade,  
And eat it from the branch and praise the  
tree?"

I say: "Alas! our fruit hath wooed the sun  
Too long,—'tis fallen and floats adown the  
stream. <sup>10</sup>

Lo, the last clusters! Pluck them every one,

And let us sup with summer; ere the gleam

Of autumn set the year's pent sorrow free,

And the woods wail like echoes from the sea."

## 85. VAIN VIRTUES

WHAT is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?

None of the sins,—but this and that fair  
deed

Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.  
These yet are virgins, whom death's timely  
knell

Might once have sainted; whom the fiends  
compel <sup>5</sup>

Together now, in snake-bound shuddering  
sheaves

Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves  
Their refuse maidenhood abominable.

Night sucks them down, the tribute of the  
pit,

Whose names, half entered in the book of  
Life, <sup>10</sup>

Were God's desire at noon. And as their  
hair

And eyes sink last, the Torturer deigns no whit  
To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined

wife,

The Sin still blithe on earth that sent  
them there.

## 86. LOST DAYS

THE lost days of my life until to-day,

What were they, could I see them on the  
street

Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of  
wheat

Sown once for food but trodden into clay?

Or golden coins squandered and still to pay? <sup>5</sup>

Or drops of blood dabbled the guilty feet?

Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat  
The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?

I do not see them here; but after death

God knows I know the faces I shall see, <sup>10</sup>  
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.

"I am myself,—what hast thou done to  
me?"

"And I—and I—thyself" (lo! each one saith)

"And thou thyself to all eternity!"

## 97. A SUPERScription

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;

I am also called No-more, Too-late, Fare-well;

Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell  
Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;  
Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen 5  
Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell

Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,  
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.

Mark me, how still I am! But should there dart

One moment through thy soul the soft surprise 10

Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—

Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart  
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart  
Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

## 101. THE ONE HOPE

WHEN vain desire at last and vain regret  
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,

What shall assuage the unforgotten pain  
And teach the unforgetful to forget?

Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet,— 5

Or may the soul at once in a green plain  
Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-fountain

And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet?

Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air  
Between the scripted petals softly blown  
Peers breathless for the gift of grace unknown,— 11

Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er  
But only the one Hope's one name be there,—  
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.

MY SISTER'S SLEEP<sup>1</sup>

SHE fell asleep on Christmas Eve.  
At length the long-ungranted shade  
Of weary eyelids overweighed  
The pain nought else might yet relieve.

Our mother, who had leaned all day 5  
Over the bed from chime to chime,  
Then raised herself for the first time,  
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread  
With work to finish. For the glare 10  
Made by her candle, she had care  
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a cold moon up,  
Of winter radiance sheer and thin;  
The hollow halo it was in 15  
Was like an icy crystal cup.

Through the small room, with subtle sound  
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove  
And reddened. In its dim alcove  
The mirror shed a clearness round. 20

I had been sitting up some nights,  
And my tired mind felt weak and blank;  
Like a sharp strengthening wine it drank  
The stillness and the broken lights. \*

Twelve struck. That sound, by dwindling years 25  
Heard in each hour, crept off; and then  
The ruffled silence spread again,  
Like water that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat:  
Her needles, as she laid them down, 30  
Met lightly, and her silken gown  
Settled: no other noise than that.

"Glory unto the Newly Born!"  
So, as said angels, she did say;  
Because we were in Christmas Day, 35  
Though it would still be long till morn.

Just then in the room over us  
There was a pushing back of chairs,  
As some who had sat unawares 40  
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

With anxious softly-stepping haste  
Our mother went where Margaret lay,  
Fearing the sounds o'erhead—should they  
Have broken her long watched-for rest!

She stooped an instant, calm, and turned; 45  
But suddenly turned back again;  
And all her features seemed in pain  
With woe, and her eyes gazed and yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face, 49  
And held my breath, and spoke no word:  
There was none spoken; but I heard  
The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept:  
And both my arms fell, and I said,  
"God knows I knew that she was dead." 55  
And there, all white, my sister slept.

<sup>1</sup>This and the three following poems were written not later than 1850.

Then kneeling, upon Christmas morn  
 A little after twelve o'clock,  
 We said, ere the first quarter struck,  
 "Christ's blessing on the newly born!" 60

### THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out  
 From the gold bar of Heaven;  
 Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
 Of waters stilled at even;  
 She had three lilies in her hand, 5  
 And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
 No wrought flowers did adorn,  
 But a white rose of Mary's gift, 10  
 For service meetly worn;  
 Her hair that lay along her back  
 Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day  
 One of God's choristers;  
 The wonder was not yet quite gone 15  
 From that still look of hers;  
 Albeit, to them she left, her day  
 Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.  
 . . . Yet now, and in this place,  
 Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair 20  
 Fell all about my face. . . .  
 Nothing; the autumn-fall of leaves.  
 The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house  
 That she was standing on;  
 By God built over the sheer depth 25  
 The which is Space begun;  
 So high, that looking downward thence  
 She scarce could see the sun. 30

It lies in Heaven, across the flood,  
 Of ether, as a bridge.  
 Beneath, the tides of day and night  
 With flame and darkness ridge  
 The void, as low as where this earth 35  
 Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met  
 'Mid deathless love's acclaims,  
 Spoke evermore among themselves  
 Their heart-remembered names; 40  
 And the souls mounting up to God  
 Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped  
 Out of the circling charm;

Until her bosom must have made 45  
 The bar she leaned on warm,  
 And the lilies lay as if asleep  
 Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw  
 Time like a pulse shake fierce 50  
 Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove  
 Within the gulf to pierce  
 Its path; and now she spoke as when  
 The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon 55  
 Was like a little feather  
 Fluttering far down the gulf; and now  
 She spoke through the still weather.  
 Her voice was like the voice the stars  
 Had when they sang together. 60

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,  
 Strove not her accents there,  
 Fain to be hearkened? When those bells  
 Possessed the mid-day air,  
 Strove not her steps to reach my side 65  
 Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,  
 For he will come," she said.  
 "Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth, 70  
 Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?  
 Are not two prayers a perfect strength?  
 And shall I feel afraid?"

"When round his head the aureole clings,  
 And he is clothed in white,  
 I'll take his hand and go with him 75  
 To the deep wells of light;  
 As unto a stream we will step down,  
 And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,  
 Occult, withheld, untrod, 80  
 Whose lamps are stirred continually  
 With prayer sent up to God;  
 And see our old prayers, granted, melt  
 Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of 85  
 That living mystic tree  
 Within whose secret growth the Dove  
 Is sometimes felt to be,  
 While every leaf that His plumes touch  
 Saith His Name audibly. 90

"And I myself will teach to him,  
 I myself, lying so,  
 The songs I sing here; which his voice  
 Shall pause in, hushed and slow,  
 And find some knowledge at each pause, 95  
 Or some new thing to know."



(Alas! we two, we two, thou say'st!  
 Yea, one wast thou with me  
 That once of old. But shall God lift  
 To endless unity 100  
 The soul whose likeness with thy soul  
 Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves  
 Where the lady Mary is,  
 With her five handmaidens, whose names 105  
 Are five sweet symphonies,  
 Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
 Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks  
 And foreheads garlanded; 110  
 Into the fine cloth white like flame  
 Weaving the golden thread,  
 To fashion the birth-robcs for them  
 Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb: 115  
 Then will I lay my cheek  
 To his, and tell about our love,  
 Not once abashed or weak:  
 And the dear Mother will approve  
 My pride, and let me speak. 120

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
 To Him round whom all souls  
 Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads  
 Bowed with their aureoles:  
 And angels meeting us shall sing 125  
 To their citherns and citoles.<sup>1</sup>

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
 Thus much for him and me:—  
 Only to live as once on earth  
 With Love,—only to be, 130  
 As then awhile, for ever now  
 Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,  
 Less sad of speech than mild,—  
 "All this is when he comes." She ceased. 135  
 The light thrilled towards her, filled  
 With angels in strong level flight.  
 Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path  
 Was vague in distant spheres: 140  
 And then she cast her arms along  
 The golden barriers,  
 And laid her face between her hands,  
 And wept. (I heard her tears.)

### THE SEA-LIMITS

CONSIDER the sea's listless chime:  
 Time's self it is, made audible,—  
 The murmur of the earth's own shell.

<sup>1</sup>Stringed musical instruments.

Secret continuance sublime  
 Is the sea's end: our sight may pass 5  
 No furlong further. Since time was,  
 This sound hath told the lapse of time.

No quiet, which is death's,—it hath  
 The mournfulness of ancient life,  
 Enduring always at dull strife. 10  
 As the world's heart of rest and wrath,  
 Its painful pulse is in the sands.  
 Last utterly, the whole sky stands,  
 Gray and not known, along its path.

Listen alone beside the sea, 15  
 Listen alone among the woods;  
 Those voices of twin solitudes  
 Shall have one sound alike to thee:  
 Hark where the murmurs of thronged men  
 Surge and sink back and surge again,— 20  
 Still the one voice of wave and tree.

Gather a shell from the strown beach  
 And listen at its lips: they sigh  
 The same desire and mystery,  
 The echo of the whole sea's speech. 25  
 And all mankind is thus at heart  
 Not anything but what thou art:  
 And Earth, Sea, Man, are all in each.

### SUDDEN LIGHT

I HAVE been here before,  
 But when or how I cannot tell:  
 I know the grass beyond the door,  
 The sweet keen smell, 4  
 The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

You have been mine before,—  
 How long ago I may not know:  
 But just when at that swallow's soar  
 Your neck turned so,  
 Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore. 10

Has this been thus before?  
 And shall not thus time's eddying flight  
 Still with our lives our love restore  
 In death's despite,  
 And day and night yield one delight once  
 more? 15

### THE CLOUD CONFINES

THE day is dark and the night  
 To him that would search their heart;  
 No lips of cloud that will part  
 Nor morning song in the light:  
 Only, gazing alone, 5  
 To him wild shadows are shown,  
 Deep under deep unknown  
 And height above unknown height.

Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."  
 The Past is over and fled;  
 Named new, we name it the old;  
 Thereof some tale hath been told,  
 But no word comes from the dead;  
 Whether at all they be,  
 Or whether as bond or free,  
 Or whether they too were we,  
 Or by what spell they have sped.  
 Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."  
 What of the heart of hate  
 That beats in thy breast, O Time?—  
 Red strife from the furthest prime,  
 And anguish of fierce debate;  
 War that shatters her slain,  
 And peace that grinds them as grain,  
 And eyes fixed ever in vain  
 On the pitiless eyes of Fate.  
 Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."  
 What of the heart of love  
 That bleeds in thy breast, O Man?—  
 Thy kisses snatched 'neath the ban  
 Of fangs that mock them above;  
 Thy bells prolonged unto knells,  
 Thy hope that a breath dispels,  
 Thy bitter forlorn farewells  
 And the empty echoes thereof?  
 Still we say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,  
 Aweary with all its wings;  
 And oh! the song the sea sings  
 Is dark everlastingly.  
 Our past is clean forgot,  
 Our present is and is not,  
 Our future's a sealed seedplot,  
 And what betwixt them are we?—  
 We who say as we go,—  
 "Strange to think by the way,  
 Whatever there is to know,  
 That shall we know one day."

## THREE SHADOWS

I LOOKED and saw your eyes  
 In the shadow of your hair  
 As a traveler sees the stream  
 In the shadow of the wood;  
 And I said, "My faint heart sighs  
 Ah me! to linger there,  
 To drink deep and to dream  
 In that sweet solitude."

I looked and saw your heart  
 In the shadow of your eyes,  
 As a seeker sees the gold  
 In the shadow of the stream;  
 And I said, "Ah me! what art  
 Should win the immortal prize,  
 Whose want must make life cold  
 And Heaven a hollow dream?"

I looked and saw your love  
 In the shadow of your heart,  
 As a diver sees the pearl  
 In the shadow of the sea;  
 And I murmured, not above  
 My breath, but all apart,—  
 "Ah! you can love, true girl,  
 And is your love for me?"

## WILLIAM MORRIS (1834-1896)

Morris's father was a partner in a firm of bill brokers in London. William, his eldest son and third child, was born on 24 March, 1834, at Elm House, Clay Hill, Walthamstow. In 1840 the family removed to Woodford Hall, on the edge of Epping Forest, and here William's boyhood was passed. From January, 1848, until December, 1851, Morris was at Marlborough College. He went thence, after a period of study with a tutor, to Exeter College, Oxford (entering in January, 1853). He aimed only at a pass degree, but not from love of idleness. He read much, and remembered everything, endowed with a memory only less remarkable than Macaulay's. His love of the Middle Ages came early and spontaneously, though it was encouraged by the Anglo-Catholicism which spread through England in the wake of the Oxford Movement. Already at Marlborough he had made a thorough study of English Gothic architecture, and at Oxford (whither he had come intending to take holy orders) his religious questionings almost led him to embrace Roman Catholicism, and did lead him to make a careful study of Anglican theology. He also, however, read Carlyle, Ruskin, and Kingsley, and came to feel their influence as a power not inconsistent with his medievalism but productive of artistic and social enthusiasm rather than of religious conviction. When he came of age he attained control of a considerable fortune, and had some thought of devoting it "to the foundation of a monastery in which he and his friends might combine an ascetic life with the organized production of religious art." The closest of these friends was Edward Burne-Jones. The monastery never was founded, but this intention remained, through many changes, a positive influence throughout his life. Actually, urged on by his study of Gothic churches in northern France in 1854 and 1855, he determined to become an architect instead of a clergyman. But by 1857 he had fallen under the spell of D. G. Rossetti, who persuaded him to study painting. Meanwhile he also had been writing verse, Keats and Tennyson being his masters amongst contemporary or recent writers. He had helped to found, and had paid for, the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* in 1856, and in it appeared the earliest of his published poems. He published *The Defense of Guenevere and other Poems* in 1858. But from this year on, though he wrote much as time passed, poetry was scarcely his chief or most serious interest. He was deeply engaged in drawing, painting, modeling, illum-

inating, and designing, and his efforts were leading him on towards the realization that his real object was the re-integration of human life. He looked back to the Middle Ages, not because he sought an impossible return to them, but because he thought that civilization in modern times had taken a wrong course, and that only by beginning anew could men hope to attain and develop what had been distinctive and valuable in medieval life—namely, its ideal of unity. This came home to him through his own experience, which made him see that inasmuch as true art is co-extensive with life, the sound practice of art involves all questions which life raises—moral, social, and political.

The problem came to him practically in 1859 when he married Jane Burden (whom he met in Oxford when, with Burne-Jones, Rossetti, and others, he was decorating the debating hall of the Oxford Union). He then set about making a home, which he wanted to be an unified structure, in plan, materials, decoration, and furniture. The result was the Red House, at Upton, Kent, where he lived from 1860 to 1865. His aim in its construction was at the time so novel that he had to design and make for himself much that he needed, and so his work was extended beyond the ecclesiastical art in which he was already engaged, to the manufacture of furniture, metal and glassware, cloth and paper wall-hangings, embroideries, jewelry, printed cottons, carpets, silk damasks, and tapestries. And later he went further still, and undertook the illumination of manuscripts, and finally the revival of printing as a fine art, at the Kelmescott Press. In nearly every direction he exercised a profound influence on modern taste, but he effected—it goes without saying—no change in the course of modern civilization. And, indeed, he himself came to recognize the impossibility of doing so, at least quickly, when in 1890 he withdrew from the socialist league with which he had been actively connected since 1883. Meanwhile he had been publishing much in both prose and verse, original and translated, including *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867), *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-1870), *Love is Enough* (1873), *Three Northern Love Stories* (1875), *The Aeneids of Virgil* (1876), *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs* (1877), *Hopes and Fears for Art* (1882), *The Odyssey of Homer* (1887), *A Dream of John Ball* (1888), and *The Roots of the Mountains* (1890). And his publications after 1890 include *Poems by the Way* (1891), *News from*



*Nowhere* (1891), *The Story of the Glittering Plain* (1891), *The Wood beyond the World* (1894), and *The Well at the World's End* (1896). In 1895 his health began to fail under the strain of his endless and nervously exhausting work, and he died on 3 October, 1896. It has been justly said that in all the work of Morris's maturity "there is a marked

absence of extravagance, of display, of superficial cleverness or effectiveness, and an equally marked sense of composition and subordination. Thus his poetry is singularly devoid of striking lines or phrases, and his wall-papers and chintzes only reveal their full excellence by the lastingness of the satisfaction they give." (J. W. Mackail.)

## THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS<sup>1</sup>

HAD she come all the way for this,  
To part at last without a kiss?  
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain  
That her own eyes might see him slain  
Beside the haystack in the floods? 5

Along the dripping leafless woods,  
The stirrup touching either shoe,  
She rode astride as troopers do;  
With kirtle kilted to her knee,  
To which the mud splashed wretchedly. 10  
And the wet dripped from every tree  
Upon her head and heavy hair,  
And on her eyelids broad and fair;  
The tears and rain ran down her face.  
By fits and starts they rode apace, 15  
And very often was his place  
Far off from her: he had to ride  
Ahead, to see what might betide  
When the roads crossed; and sometimes, when  
There rose a murmuring from his men, 20  
Had to turn back with promises.  
Ah me! she had but little ease;  
And often for pure doubt and dread  
She sobbed, made giddy in the head  
By the swift riding; while, for cold, 25  
Her slender fingers scarce could hold  
The wet reins; yea, and scarcely, too,  
She felt the foot within her shoe  
Against the stirrup. All for this:  
To part at last without a kiss 30  
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they neared that old soaked hay,  
They saw, across the only way,  
That Judas, Godmar; and the three  
Red running lions dismally 35  
Grinned from his pennon, under which  
In one straight line along the ditch,  
They counted thirty heads.

So then,  
While Robert turned round to his men,  
She saw at once the wretched end, 40  
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend

Her coil? the wrong way from her head,  
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:  
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one;  
At Poitiers where we made them run 45  
So fast—Why, sweet my love, good cheer,  
The Gascon frontier is so near,  
Nought after this."

But, "O," she said,  
"My God! my God! I have to tread  
The long way back without you; then 50  
The court at Paris; those six men;  
The gratings of the Chatelet;<sup>3</sup>  
The swift Seine on some rainy day  
Like this, and people standing by  
And laughing, while my weak hands try 55  
To recollect how strong men swim.  
All this, or else a life with him,  
For which I should be damned at last:  
Would God that this next hour were past!"

He answered not, but cried his cry, 60  
"St. George for Marny!" cheerily;  
And laid his hand upon her rein.  
Alas! no man of all his train  
Gave back that cheery cry again;  
And, while for rage his thumb beat fast 65  
Upon his sword-hilt, some one cast  
About his neck a kerchief long,  
And bound him.

Then they went along  
To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,  
Your lover's life is on the wane 70  
So fast that, if this very hour  
You yield not as my paramour,  
He will not see the rain leave off—  
Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff,  
Sir Robert, or I slay you now." 75

She laid her hand upon her brow,  
Then gazed upon the palm, as though  
She thought her forehead bled, and—"No!"  
She said, and turned her head away,  
As there were nothing else to say, 80  
And everything were settled. Red  
Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:  
"Jehane, on yonder hill there stands  
My castle, guarding well my lands:

<sup>1</sup>Published in the volume entitled *The Defense of Guenevere and Other Poems* (1858).

<sup>2</sup>A tightly fitting cap.

<sup>3</sup>Dungeon in Paris.

What hinders me from taking you, 85  
And doing that I list to do  
To your fair willful body, while  
Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile  
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,  
A long way out she thrust her chin: 90  
"You know that I should strangle you  
While you were sleeping; or bite through  
Your throat, by God's help—ah!" she said,  
"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!  
For in such wise they hem me in, 95  
I cannot choose but sin and sin,  
Whatever happens: yet I think  
They could not make me eat or drink,  
And so should I just reach my rest."  
"Nay, if you do not my behest, 100  
O Jehane! though I love you well,"  
Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell  
All that I know?" "Foul lies," she said.  
"Eh! lies, my Jehane? by God's head,  
At Paris folks would deem them true! 105  
Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you:  
'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!  
Give us Jehane to burn or drown!'  
Eh—gag me Robert!—sweet my friend,  
This were indeed a piteous end 110  
For those long fingers, and long feet,  
And long neck, and smooth shoulders sweet;  
An end that few men would forget  
That saw it—So, an hour yet:  
Consider, Jehane, which to take 115  
Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,  
Dismounting, did she leave that place,  
And totter some yards: with her face  
Turned upward to the sky she lay,  
Her head on a wet heap of hay, 120  
And fell asleep. And while she slept,  
And did not dream, the minutes crept  
Round to the twelve again; but she,  
Being waked at last, sighed quietly,  
And strangely childlike came, and said: 125  
"I will not." Straightway Godmar's head,  
As though it hung on strong wires, turned  
Most sharply round, and his face burned.

For Robert—both his eyes were dry,  
He could not weep, but gloomily 130  
He seemed to watch the rain; yea, too,  
His lips were firm. He tried once more  
To touch her lips; she reached out, sore  
And vain desire so tortured them,  
The poor gray lips, and now the hem 135  
Of his sleeve brushed them.

With a start  
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;

From Robert's throat he loosed the bands  
Of silk and mail. With empty hands  
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw 140  
The long bright blade without a flaw  
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand  
In Robert's hair; she saw him bend  
Back Robert's head; she saw him send  
The thin steel down. The blow told well: 145  
Right backward the knight Robert fell,  
And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,  
Unwitting, as I deem. So then  
Godmar turned grinning to his men,  
Who ran, some five or six, and beat 150  
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turned again and said:  
"So, Jehane, the first fitte<sup>1</sup> is read!  
Take note, my lady, that your way  
Lies backward to the Chatelet!" 155  
She shook her head and gazed awhile  
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,  
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had  
Beside the haystack in the floods. 160

## THE EARTHLY PARADISE<sup>2</sup>

### AN APOLOGY

OF HEAVEN or Hell I have no power to sing;  
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,  
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,  
Or bring again the pleasure of past years;  
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears, 6  
Or hope again for aught that I can say,  
The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,  
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,

<sup>1</sup>First section. (The word was formerly used to designate the parts of a poem.)

<sup>2</sup>This poem was published in 4 parts: Parts I and II in one volume in 1868, and Parts III and IV in two volumes in 1870. It consists of 24 tales, preceded by the *Apology* printed above, and linked together, in a manner suggested by Chaucer, through a narrative contained in a lengthy *Prologue*. A company of gentlemen and mariners of Norway, flying from the plague which spread over Europe in the 14th century, sailed forth in search of the fabled earthly paradise. After many troubles and the lapse of many years they reached, now old men, "a nameless city in a distant sea," where Hellenic civilization and culture had been preserved through the centuries. Hospitably received, they rested there, and with their hosts held a feast twice each month for a year. At each feast a tale was told, the first by one of the hosts, the second by one of the Norwegian guests, and so on in regular alternation. Thus 12 tales from classical sources are included in *The Earthly Paradise*, told by the hosts; and 12 others, told by the gentlemen and mariners of Norway, which are derived from medieval sources, chiefly Latin, French, and Icelandic. Morris did not go far afield for his tales, and when a German scholar (Julius Riegel) wrote a learned monograph on his sources, he said that the treatise taught him "a great deal about his stories he had not known before."

And, feeling kindly unto all the earth, 10  
Grudge every minute as it passes by,  
Made the more mindful that the sweet days  
die:

Remember me a little then, I pray,  
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care 15  
That weighs us down who live and earn our  
bread,

These idle verses have no power to bear;  
So let me sing of names remembered,  
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,  
Or long time take their memory quite away 20  
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due  
time,  
Why should I strive to set the crooked  
straight?

Let it suffice me that my murmuring rime  
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,<sup>1</sup>  
Telling a tale not too importunate 26  
To those who in the sleepy region stay,  
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king  
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did  
show, 30  
That through one window men beheld the  
spring,  
And through another saw the summer glow,  
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,  
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,  
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is, 36  
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,  
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss  
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,  
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;  
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall  
slay— 41  
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

### ATALANTA'S RACE<sup>2</sup>

Atalanta, daughter of King Schoeneus, not will-  
ing to lose her virgin's estate, made it a law

<sup>1</sup>The realm of Morpheus had two gates, one of ivory and one of horn. True dreams issued from the latter; false from the former.

<sup>2</sup>This is the first tale told, in the first month (March), by one of the hosts:

"His clear thin voice upon their ears did fall,  
Telling a tale of times long passed away,  
When men might cross a kingdom in a day,  
And kings remembered they should one day die,  
And all folk dwelt in great simplicity."

Morris's sources for this tale were Ovid's *Melamorphoses* (Bk. X) and the *Bibliotheca* of Apollodorus.

to all suitors that they should run a race with  
her in the public place, and if they failed to  
overcome her should die unrevenged; and thus  
many brave men perished. At last came  
Milanion, the son of Amphi-damas, who,  
outrunning her with the help of Venus, gained  
the virgin and wedded her.

THROUGH thick Arcadian woods a hunter went,  
Following the beasts up, on a fresh spring  
day;

But since his horn-tipped bow but seldom  
bent,

Now at the noontide naught had happened to  
slay,

Within a vale he called his hounds away, 5  
Hearkening the echoes of his lone voice cling  
About the cliffs and through the beech-trees  
ring.

But when they ended, still awhile he stood,  
And but the sweet familiar thrush could hear,  
And all the day-long noises of the wood, 10  
And o'er the dry leaves of the vanished year  
His hounds' feet pattering as they drew anear,  
And heavy breathing from their heads low  
hung,

To see the mighty cornel bow unstrung.

Then smiling did he turn to leave the place, 15  
But with his first step some new fleeting  
thought

A shadow cast across his sunburnt face:  
I think the golden net that April brought  
From some warm world his wavering soul had  
caught;

For, sunk in vague sweet longing, did he go 20  
Betwixt the trees with doubtful steps and slow.

Yet howsoever slow he went, at last  
The trees grew sparser, and the wood was  
done;

Whereon one farewell, backward look he cast,  
Then, turning round to see what place was  
won, 25

With shaded eyes looked underneath the sun,  
And o'er green meads and new-turned furrows  
brown

Beheld the gleaming of King Schoeneus' town.

So thitherward he turned, and on each side  
The folk were busy on the teeming land, 30  
And man and maid from the brown furrows  
cried,

Or midst the newly blossomed vines did stand,  
And as the rustic weapon pressed the hand  
Thought of the nodding of the well-filled ear,  
Or how the knife the heavy bunch should  
shear. 35



Merry it was: about him sung the birds,  
The spring flowers bloomed along the firm  
dry road,  
The sleek-skinned mothers of the sharp-horned  
herds  
Now for the barefoot milking-maidens lowed;  
While from the freshness of his blue abode, 40  
Glad his death-bearing arrows to forget,  
The broad sun blazed, nor scattered plagues  
as yet.

Through such fair things unto the gates he  
came,  
And found them open, as though peace were  
there;  
Wherethrough, unquestioned of his race or  
name, 45  
He entered, and along the streets 'gan fare,  
Which at the first of folk were wellnigh bare;  
But pressing on, and going more hastily,  
Men hurrying too he 'gan at last to see.

Following the last of these, he still pressed on,  
Until an open space he came unto, 51  
Where wreaths of fame had oft been lost and  
won,  
For feats of strength folk there were wont to  
do.

And now our hunter looked for something new,  
Because the whole wide space was bare, and  
stilled 55  
The high seats were, with eager people filled.

There with the others to a seat he gat,  
Whence he beheld a broidered canopy,  
'Neath which in fair array King Schœneus sat  
Upon his throne with councilors thereby; 60  
And underneath his well-wrought seat and  
high,  
He saw a golden image of the sun,  
A silver image of the fleet-foot one.

A brazen altar stood beneath their feet  
Whereon a thin flame flickered in the wind;  
Nigh this a herald clad in raiment meet 66  
Made ready even now his horn to wind,  
By whom a huge man held a sword, entwined  
With yellow flowers; these stood a little space  
From off the altar, nigh the starting-place.

And there two runners did the sign abide, 71  
Foot set to foot: a young man slim and fair,  
Crisp-haired, well-knit, with firm limbs often  
tried  
In places where no man his strength may  
spare;  
Dainty his thin coat was, and on his hair 75  
A golden circlet of renown he wore,  
And in his hand an olive garland bore.

But on this day with whom shall he contend?  
A maid stood by him like Diana clad  
When in the woods she lists her bow to bend,  
Too fair for one to look on and be glad, 81  
Who scarcely yet has thirty summers had,  
If he must still behold her from afar;  
Too fair to let the world live free from war.

She seemed all earthly matters to forget; 85  
Of all tormenting lines her face was clear,  
Her wide gray eyes upon the goal were set  
Calm and unmoved as though no soul were  
near.

But her foe trembled as a man in fear,  
Nor from her loveliness one moment turned  
His anxious face with fierce desire that burned.

Now through the hush there broke the trum-  
pet's clang 92  
Just as the setting sun made eventide.  
Then from light feet a spurt of dust there  
sprang,  
And swiftly were they running side by side;  
But silent did the thronging folk abide 96  
Until the turning-post was reached at last,  
And round about it still abreast they passed.

But when the people saw how close they ran,  
When half-way to the starting-point they  
were, 100  
A cry of joy broke forth, whereat the man  
Headed the white-foot runner, and drew near  
Unto the very end of all his fear;  
And scarce his straining feet the ground could  
feel,  
And bliss unhoped-for o'er his heart 'gan steal.

But midst the loud victorious shouts he heard  
Her footsteps drawing nearer, and the sound  
Of fluttering raiment, and thereat afeard 108  
His flushed and eager face he turned around,  
And even then he felt her past him bound  
Fleet as the wind, but scarcely saw her there  
Till on the goal she laid her fingers fair.

There stood she breathing like a little child  
Amid some warlike clamor laid asleep,  
For no victorious joy her red lips smiled, 115  
Her cheek its wonted freshness did but keep;  
No glance lit up her clear gray eyes and deep,  
Though some divine thought softened all her  
face  
As once more rang the trumpet through the  
place.

But her late foe stopped short amidst his  
course, 120  
One moment gazed upon her piteously,  
Then with a groan his lingering feet did force

To leave the spot whence he her eyes could see;  
And, changed like one who knows his time  
must be

But short and bitter, without any word 125  
He knelt before the bearer of the sword;

Then high rose up the gleaming deadly blade,  
Bared of its flowers, and through the crowded  
place

Was silence now, and midst of it the maid  
Went by the poor wretch at a gentle pace, 130  
And he to hers upturned his sad white face;  
Nor did his eyes behold another sight  
Ere on his soul there fell eternal light.

So was the pageant ended, and all folk  
Talking of this and that familiar thing 135  
In little groups from that sad concourse broke.  
For now the shrill bats were upon the wing,  
And soon dark night would slay the evening,  
And in dark gardens sang the nightingale  
Her little-heeded, oft-repeated tale. 140

And with the last of all the hunter went,  
Who, wondering at the strange sight he had  
seen,

Prayed an old man to tell him what it meant,  
Both why the vanquished man so slain had  
been,

And if the maiden were an earthly queen, 145  
Or rather what much more she seemed to be,  
No sharer in this world's mortality.

"Stranger," said he, "I pray she soon may die  
Whose lovely youth has slain so many an one!  
King Schoeneus' daughter is she verily, 150  
Who when her eyes first looked upon the sun  
Was fain to end her life but new begun,  
For he had vowed to leave but men alone  
Sprung from his loins when he from earth was  
gone.

"Therefore he bade one leave her in the wood,  
And let wild things deal with her as they might,  
But this being done, some cruel God thought  
good 157

To save her beauty in the world's despite:  
Folk say that her, so delicate and white  
As now she is, a rough root-grubbing bear  
Amidst her shapeless cubs at first did rear.

"In course of time the woodfolk slew her  
nurse, 162

And to their rude abode the youngling brought,  
And reared her up to be a kingdom's curse,  
Who grown a woman, of no kingdom thought,  
But armed and swift, mid beasts destruction  
wrought,

Nor spared two shaggy centaur kings to slay  
To whom her body seemed an easy prey.

"So to this city, led by fate, she came 169  
Whom known by signs, whereof I cannot tell,  
King Schoeneus for his child at last did claim,  
Nor elsewhere since that day doth she dwell,  
Sending too many a noble soul to hell—  
What! thine eyes glisten! what then, thinkest  
thou

Her shining head unto the yoke to bow? 175

"Listen, my son and love some other maid,  
For she the saffron gown will never wear,  
And on no flower-strewn couch shall she be  
laid,

Nor shall her voice make glad a lover's ear:  
Yet if of Death thou hast not any fear, 180  
Yea, rather, if thou lov'st him utterly,  
Thou still mayst woo her ere thou com'st to  
die,

"Like him that on this day thou sawest lie  
dead;

For, fearing as I deem the sea-born one, 184  
The maid has vowed e'en such a man to wed  
As in the course her swift feet can outrun,  
But whoso fails herein, his days are done:  
He came the highest that was slain to-day,  
Although with him I deem she did but play.

"Behold, such mercy Atalanta gives 190  
To those that long to win her loveliness;  
Be wise! be sure that many a maid there lives  
Gentler than she, of beauty little less,  
Whose swimming eyes thy loving words shall  
bless,

When in some garden, knee set close to knee,  
Thou sing'st the song that love may teach to  
thee." 196

So to the hunter spake that ancient man,  
And left him for his own home presently;  
But he turned round, and through the moon-  
light wan

Reached the thick wood, and there 'twixt tree  
and tree 200

Distraught he passed the long night feverishly,  
'Twixt sleep and waking, and at dawn arose  
To wage hot war against his speechless foes.

There to the hart's flank seemed his shaft to  
grow,

As panting down the broad green glades he  
flew, 205

There by his horn the Dryads well might know  
His thrust against the bear's heart had been  
true,

And there Adonis' bane his javelin slew;  
But still in vain through rough and smooth he  
went,

For none the more his restlessness was spent.

So wandering, he to Argive cities came, 211  
 And in the lists with valiant men he stood,  
 And by great deeds he won him praise and  
 fame,  
 And heaps of wealth for little-valued blood;  
 But none of all these things, or life, seemed  
 good 215  
 Unto his heart, where still unsatisfied  
 A ravenous longing warred with fear and pride.

Therefore it happed when but a month had  
 gone  
 Since he had left King Schoeneus' city old,  
 In hunting-gear again, again alone 220  
 The forest-border meads did he behold,  
 Where still mid thoughts of August's quivering  
 gold  
 Folk hoed the wheat, and clipped the vine in  
 trust  
 Of faint October's purple-foaming must. 224

And once again he passed the peaceful gate,  
 While to his beating heart his lips did lie,  
 That, owning not victorious love and fate,  
 Said, half aloud, "And here too must I try  
 To win of alien men the mastery, 229  
 And gather for my head fresh meed of fame,  
 And cast new glory on my father's name."

In spite of that, how beat his heart when first  
 Folk said to him, "And art thou come to see  
 That which still makes our city's name accurst  
 Among all mothers for its cruelty? 235  
 Then know indeed that fate is good to thee,  
 Because to-morrow a new luckless one  
 Against the white-foot maid is pledged to  
 run."

So on the morrow with no curious eyes,  
 As once he did, that piteous sight he saw, 240  
 Nor did that wonder in his heart arise  
 As toward the goal the conquering maid 'gan  
 draw,  
 Nor did he gaze upon her eyes with awe,  
 Too full the pain of longing filled his heart  
 For fear or wonder there to have a part. 245

But O, how long the night was ere it went!  
 How long it was before the dawn begun  
 Showed to the wakening birds the sun's intent  
 That not in darkness should the world be done!  
 And then, and then, how long before the sun  
 Bade silently the toilers of the earth 251  
 Get forth to fruitless cares or empty mirth!

And long it seemed that in the market place  
 He stood and saw the chaffering folk go by,  
 Ere from the ivory throne King Schoeneus'  
 face 255  
 Looked down upon the murmur royally,

But then came trembling that the time was  
 nigh  
 When he midst pitying looks his love must  
 claim,  
 And jeering voices must salute his name.

But as the throng he pierced to gain the  
 throne, 260  
 His alien face distraught and anxious told  
 What hopeless errand he was bound upon,  
 And, each to each, folk whispered to behold  
 His godlike limbs; nay, and one woman old  
 As he went by must pluck him by the sleeve  
 And pray him yet that wretched love to leave.

For sidling up she said, "Canst thou live twice,  
 Fair son? canst thou have joyful youth again,  
 That thus thou goest to the sacrifice  
 Thyself the victim? nay then, all in vain 270  
 Thy mother bore her longing and her pain,  
 And one more maiden on the earth must dwell  
 Hopeless of joy, nor fearing death and hell.

"O fool, thou knowest not the compact then  
 That with the three-formed goddess she has  
 made 275  
 To keep her from the loving lips of men,  
 And in no saffron gown to be arrayed,  
 And therewithal with glory to be paid,  
 And love of her the moonlit river sees 279  
 White 'gainst the shadow of the formless trees.

"Come back, and I myself will pray for thee  
 Unto the sea-born framer of delights,  
 To give thee her who on the earth may be  
 The fairest stirrer up to death and fights,  
 To quench with hopeful days and joyous  
 nights 285  
 The flame that doth thy youthful heart consume:  
 Come back, nor give thy beauty to the tomb."

How should he listen to her earnest speech?  
 Words, such as he not once or twice had said  
 Unto himself, whose meaning scarce could  
 reach 290  
 The firm abode of that sad hardihead?  
 He turned about, and through the market-  
 stead  
 Swiftly he passed, until before the throne  
 In the cleared space he stood at last alone.

Then said the King: "Stranger, what dost  
 thou here? 295  
 Have any of my folk done ill to thee?  
 Or art thou of the forest men in fear?  
 Or art thou of the sad fraternity  
 Who still will strive my daughter's mates to be,  
 Staking their lives to win to earthly bliss 300  
 The lonely maid, the friend of Artemis?"



"O King," he said, "thou sayest the word indeed;  
Nor will I quit the strife till I have won  
My sweet delight, or death to end my need.  
And know that I am called Milanion, 305  
Of King Amphidamas the well-loved son:  
So fear not that to thy old name, O King,  
Much loss or shame my victory will bring."

"Nay, Prince," said Schœneus, "welcome to this land  
Thou wert indeed, if thou wert here to try 310  
Thy strength 'gainst someone mighty of his hand:  
Nor would we grudge thee well-won mastery.  
But now, why wilt thou come to me to die,  
And at my door lay down thy luckless head,  
Swelling the band of the unhappy dead, 315

"Whose curses even now my heart doth fear?  
Lo, I am old, and know what life can be,  
And what a bitter thing is death anear.  
O Son! be wise, and hearken unto me,  
And if no other can be dear to thee, 320  
At least as now, yet is the world full wide,  
And bliss in seeming hopeless hearts may hide:

"But if thou lovest life, then all is lost."  
"Nay, King," Milanion said, "thy words are vain. 324  
Doubt not that I have counted well the cost.  
But say, on what day wilt thou that I gain  
Fulfilled delight, or death to end my pain?  
Right glad were I if it could be to-day,  
And all my doubts at rest for ever lay."

"Nay," said King Schœneus, "thus it shall not be, 330  
But rather shalt thou let a month go by,  
And weary with thy prayers for victory  
What god thou know'st the kindest and most nigh.  
So doing, still perchance thou shalt not die;  
And with my good-will wouldst thou have the maid, 335  
For of the equal gods I grow afraid.

"And until then, O Prince, be thou my guest,  
And all these troublous things awhile forget."

"Nay," said he, "couldst thou give my soul good rest,  
And on mine head a sleepy garland set, 340  
Then had I 'scaped the meshes of the net,  
Nor shouldst thou hear from me another word;  
But now, make sharp thy fearful heading sword.

"Yet will I do what son of man may do,  
And promise all the gods may most desire, 345  
That to myself I may at least be true;  
And on that day my heart and limbs so tire,  
With utmost strain and measureless desire,  
That, at the worst, I may but fall asleep  
When in the sunlight round that sword shall sweep." 350

He went therewith, nor anywhere would bide,  
But unto Argos restlessly did wend;  
And there, as one who lays all hope aside,  
Because the leech has said his life must end,  
Silent farewell he bade to foe and friend, 355  
And took his way unto the restless sea,  
For there he deemed his rest and help might be.

Upon the shore of Argolis there stands  
A temple to the goddess that he sought,  
That, turned unto the lion-bearing lands, 360  
Fenced from the east, of cold winds hath no thought,  
Though to no homestead there the sheaves are brought,  
No groaning press torments the close-clipped murk,  
Lonely the fane stands, far from all men's work.

Pass through a close, set thick with myrtle-trees, 365  
Through the brass doors that guard the holy place,  
And, entering, hear the washing of the seas  
That twice a day rise high above the base,  
And, with the southwest urging them, embrace  
The marble feet of her that standeth there, 370  
That shrink not, naked though they be and fair.

Small is the fane through which the sea-wind sings  
About Queen Venus' well-wrought image white;  
But hung around are many precious things,  
The gifts of those who, longing for delight, 375  
Have hung them there within the goddess' sight,  
And in return have taken at her hands  
The living treasures of the Grecian lands.

And thither now has come Milanion,  
And showed unto the priests' wide-open eyes  
Gifts fairer than all those that there have shone, 381  
Silk cloths, inwrought with Indian fantasies,  
And bowls inscribed with sayings of the wise  
Above the deeds of foolish living things,  
And mirrors fit to be the gifts of kings. 385

And now before the sea-born one he stands,  
By the sweet veiling smoke made dim and  
soft;  
And while the incense trickles from his hands,  
And while the odorous smoke-wreaths hang  
aloft, 389  
Thus doth he pray to her: "O thou, who oft  
Hast holpen man and maid in their distress,  
Despise me not for this my wretchedness!

"O goddess, among us who dwell below,  
Kings and great men, great for a little while,  
Have pity on the lowly heads that bow, 395  
Nor hate the hearts that love them without  
guile;  
Wilt thou be worse than these, and is thy smile  
A vain device of him who set thee here,  
An empty dream of some artificer?

"O great one, some men love, and are  
ashamed; 400  
Some men are weary of the bonds of love;  
Yea, and by some men lightly art thou blamed,  
That from thy toils their lives they cannot  
move,  
And 'mid the ranks of men their manhood  
prove.  
Alas! O goddess, if thou slayest me 405  
What new immortal can I serve but thee?

"Think then, will it bring honor to thy head  
If folk say, 'Everything aside he cast  
And to all fame and honor was he dead,  
And to his one hope now is dead at last, 410  
Since all unholpen he is gone and past:  
Ah, the gods love not man, for certainly,  
He to his helper did not cease to cry.'

"Nay, but thou wilt help; they who died be-  
fore  
Not single-hearted as I deem came here, 415  
Therefore unthanked they laid their gifts  
before  
Thy stainless feet, still shivering with their  
fear,  
Lest in their eyes their true thought might  
appear,  
Who sought to be the lords of that fair town,  
Dreaded of men and winners of renown. 420

"O Queen, thou knowest I pray not for this:  
O set us down together in some place  
Where not a voice can break our heaven of  
bliss,  
Where nought but rocks and I can see her  
face,  
Softening beneath the marvel of thy grace, 425  
Where not a foot our vanished steps can  
track—  
The golden age, the golden age come back!

"O fairest, hear me now who do thy will,  
Plead for thy rebel that she be not slain,  
But live and love and be thy servant still; 430  
Ah, give her joy and take away my pain,  
And thus two long-enduring servants gain.  
An easy thing this is to do for me,  
What need of my vain words to weary thee!

"But none the less, this place will I not leave  
Until I needs must go my death to meet,  
Or at thy hands some happy sign receive 437  
That in great joy we twain may one day greet  
Thy presence here and kiss thy silver feet,  
Such as we deem thee, fair beyond all words,  
Victorious o'er our servants and our lords."

Then from the altar back a space he drew,  
But from the Queen turned not his face away,  
But 'gainst a pillar leaned, until the blue  
That arched the sky, at ending of the day, 445  
Was turned to ruddy gold and changing gray,  
And clear but low, the nigh-ebbed windless sea  
In the still evening murmured ceaselessly.

And there he stood when all the sun was down,  
Nor had he moved, when the dim golden light,  
Like the far luster of a godlike town, 451  
Had left the world to seeming hopeless night,  
Nor would he move the more when wan moon-  
light  
Streamed through the pillars for a little while,  
And lighted up the white Queen's changeless  
smile. 455

Nought noted he the shallow-flowing sea  
As step by step it set the wrack a-swim;  
The yellow torchlight nothing noted he  
Wherein with fluttering gown and half-bared  
limb  
The temple damsels sung their midnight  
hymn; 460  
And nought the doubled stillness of the fane  
When they were gone and all was hushed  
again.

But when the waves had touched the marble  
base,  
And steps the fish swim over twice a-day,  
The dawn beheld him sunken in his place 465  
Upon the floor; and sleeping there he lay,  
Not heeding aught the little jets of spray  
The roughened sea brought nigh, across him  
cast,  
For as one dead all thought from him had  
passed.

Yet long before the sun had showed his head,  
Long ere the varied hangings on the wall 471  
Had gained once more their blue and green  
and red,

He rose as one some well-known sign doth call  
 When war upon the city's gates doth fall,  
 And scarce like one fresh risen out of sleep,  
 He 'gan again his broken watch to keep. 476

Then he turned round; not for the seagull's  
 cry

That wheeled above the temple in his flight,  
 Not for the fresh south-wind that lovingly  
 Breathed on the new-born day and dying night,  
 But some strange hope 'twixt fear and great  
 delight 481

Drew round his face, now flushed, now pale  
 and wan,  
 And still constrained his eyes the sea to scan.

Now a faint light lit up the southern sky,  
 Not sun or moon, for all the world was gray,  
 But this a bright cloud seemed, that drew  
 anigh, 486

Lighting the dull waves that beneath it lay  
 As toward the temple still it took its way,  
 And still grew greater, till Milanion  
 Saw naught for dazzling light that round him  
 shone. 490

But as he staggered with his arms outspread,  
 Delicious unnamed odors breathed around;  
 For languid happiness he bowed his head,  
 And with wet eyes sank down upon the  
 ground, 494  
 Nor wished for aught, nor any dream he found  
 To give him reason for that happiness,  
 Or make him ask more knowledge of his bliss.

At last his eyes were cleared, and he could see  
 Through happy tears the goddess face to face  
 With that faint image of divinity 500  
 Whose well-wrought smile and dainty change-  
 less grace

Until that morn so gladdened all the place;  
 Then he unwitting cried aloud her name,  
 And covered up his eyes for fear and shame.

But through the stillness he her voice could  
 hear 505

Piercing his heart with joy scarce bearable,  
 That said, "Milanion, wherefore dost thou  
 fear?"

I am not hard to those who love me well;  
 List to what I a second time will tell,  
 And thou mayest hear perchance, and live to  
 save 510

The cruel maiden from a loveless grave.

"See, by my feet three golden apples lie—  
 Such fruit among the heavy roses falls,  
 Such fruit my watchful damsels carefully  
 Store up within the best loved of my walls, 515  
 Ancient Damascus, where the lover calls

Above my unseen head, and faint and light  
 The rose-leaves flutter round me in the night.

"And note that these are not alone most fair  
 With heavenly gold, but longing strange they  
 bring 520

Unto the hearts of men, who will not care,  
 Beholding these, for any once-loved thing  
 Till round the shining sides their fingers cling.  
 And thou shalt see thy well-girt swiftfoot maid  
 By sight of these amidst her glory stayed. 525

"For bearing these within a scrip with thee,  
 When first she heads thee from the starting-  
 place

Cast down the first one for her eyes to see,  
 And when she turns aside make on apace,  
 And if again she heads thee in the race 530  
 Spare not the other two to cast aside  
 If she not long enough behind will bide.

"Farewell, and when has come the happy time  
 That she Diana's raiment must unbind,  
 And all the world seems blessed with Saturn's  
 clime, 535

And thou with eager arms about her twined  
 Beholdest first her gray eyes growing kind,  
 Surely, O trembler, thou shalt scarcely then  
 Forget the helper of unhappy men."

Milanion raised his head at this last word, 540  
 For now so soft and kind she seemed to be  
 No longer of her Godhead was he feared;  
 Too late he looked; for nothing could he see  
 But the white image glimmering doubtfully  
 In the departing twilight cold and gray, 545  
 And those three apples on the steps that lay.

These then he caught up quivering with de-  
 light,

Yet fearful lest it all might be a dream;  
 And though aweary with the watchful night,  
 And sleepless nights of longing, still did deem  
 He could not sleep; but yet the first unbeam  
 That smote the fane across the heaving deep  
 Shone on him laid in calm, untroubled sleep.

But little ere the noontide did he rise, 554  
 And why he felt so happy scarce could tell  
 Until the gleaming apples met his eyes.

Then leaving the fair place where this befell  
 Oft he looked back as one who loved it well,  
 Then homeward to the haunts of men, 'gan  
 wend

To bring all things unto a happy end. 560

Now has the lingering month at last gone by,  
 Again are all folk round the running place,  
 Nor other seems the dismal pageantry



Than heretofore, but that another face  
Looks o'er the smooth course ready for the  
    race; 565  
For now, beheld of all, Milanion  
Stands on the spot he twice has looked upon.

But yet—what change is this that holds the  
    maid?  
Does she indeed see in his glittering eye  
More than disdain of the sharp shearing blade,  
Some happy hope of help and victory? 571  
The others seemed to say, "We come to die;  
Look down upon us for a little while,  
That, dead, we may bethink us of thy smile."

But he—what look of mastery was this 575  
He cast on her? why were his lips so red;  
Why was his face so flushed with happiness?  
So looks not one who deems himself but dead,  
E'en if to death he bows a willing head;  
So rather looks a god well pleased to find 580  
Some earthly damsel fashioned to his mind.

Why must she drop her lids before his gaze,  
And even as she casts adown her eyes  
Redden to note his eager glance of praise,  
And wish that she were clad in other guise?  
Why must the memory to her heart arise 586  
Of things unnoticed when they first were  
    heard,  
Some lover's song, some answering maiden's  
    word?

What makes these longings, vague, without a  
    name,  
And this vain pity never felt before, 590  
This sudden languor, this contempt of fame,  
This tender sorrow for the time past o'er,  
These doubts that grow each minute more and  
    more?  
Why does she tremble as the time grows near,  
And weak defeat and woeful victory fear? 595

But while she seemed to hear her beating  
    heart,  
Above their heads the trumpet blast rang out  
And forth they sprang, and she must play her  
    part;  
Then flew her white feet, knowing not a doubt,  
Though, slackening once, she turned her head  
    about 600  
But then she cried aloud and faster fled  
Than e'er before, and all men deemed him  
    dead.

But with no sound he raised aloft his hand,  
And thence what seemed a ray of light there  
    flew  
And past the maid rolled on along the sand;

Then trembling she her feet together drew  
And in her heart a strong desire there grew  
To have the toy; some god she thought had  
    given 608  
That gift to her, to make of earth a heaven.

Then from the course with eager steps she ran,  
And in her odorous bosom laid the gold.  
But when she turned again, the great-limbed  
    man  
Now well ahead she failed not to behold,  
And, mindful of her glory waxing cold,  
Sprang up and followed him in hot pursuit,  
Though with one hand she touched the golden  
    fruit. 616

Note, too, the bow that she was wont to bear  
She laid aside to grasp the glittering prize,  
And o'er her shoulder from the quiver fair  
Three arrows fell and lay before her eyes  
Unnoticed, as amidst the people's cries 621  
She sprang to head the strong Milanion,  
Who now the turning-post had wellnigh won.

But as he set his mighty hand on it,  
White fingers underneath his own were laid,  
And white limbs from his dazzled eyes did  
    flit;  
Then he the second fruit cast by the maid:  
She ran awhile, and then as one afraid  
Wavered and stopped, and turned and made  
    no stay  
Until the globe with its bright fellow lay. 630

Then, as a troubled glance she cast around,  
Now far ahead the Argive could she see,  
And in her garment's hem one hand she wound  
To keep the double prize, and strenuously  
Sped o'er the course, and little doubt had she  
To win the day, though now but scanty space  
Was left betwixt him and the winning-place.

Short was the way unto such wingèd feet;  
Quickly she gained upon him, till at last 639  
He turned about her eager eyes to meet,  
And from his hand the third fair apple cast.  
She wavered not, but turned and ran so fast  
After the prize that should her bliss fulfill,  
That in her hand it lay ere it was still. 644

Nor did she rest, but turned about to win  
Once more an unblest woeful victory  
And yet—and yet—why does her breath begin  
To fail her, and her feet drag heavily?  
Why fails she now to see if far or nigh 649  
The goal is? Why do her gray eyes grow  
    dim?  
Why do these tremors run through every  
    limb?

She spreads her arms abroad some stay to find,  
Else must she fall, indeed, and findeth this,  
A strong man's arms about her body twined.  
Nor may she shudder now to feel his kiss, 655  
So wrapped she is in new unbroken bliss;  
Made happy that the foe the prize hath won,  
She weeps glad tears for all her glory done.

Shatter the trumpet, hew adown the posts!  
Upon the brazen altar break the sword, 660  
And scatter incense to appease the ghosts  
Of those who died here by their own award.  
Bring forth the image of the mighty lord,  
And her who unseen o'er the runners hung,  
And did a deed for ever to be sung. 665

Here are the gathered folk; make no delay,  
Open King Schœneus' well-filled treasury,  
Bring out the gifts long hid from light of day,  
The golden bowls o'erwrought with imagery,  
Gold chains, and unguents brought from over  
sea, 670  
The saffron gown the old Phœnician brought,  
Within the temple of the goddess wrought.

O ye, O damsels, who shall never see  
Her, that Love's servant bringeth now to you,  
Returning from another victory, 675  
In some cool bower do all that now is due!  
Since she in token of her service new  
Shall give to Venus offerings rich enow,  
Her maiden zone, her arrows, and her bow,

## WALTER PATER (1839-1894)

Walter Horatio Pater was born at Shadwell, in East London, on 4 August, 1839. His father, who was a physician, died so early that in later life Pater could scarcely remember him. At his death the family moved to a house in Chase Side, Enfield, where they remained some fourteen or fifteen years. Pater received his earliest education at a school in Enfield, and at fourteen proceeded to King's School, Canterbury. There he led a happy life—to some extent portrayed in *Emerald Uthwart*—despite his complete indifference to outdoor games. He did creditable work at school, but was not precocious in his development, though as a youth he shadowed forth his manhood by living much alone and exhibiting a meditative and serious disposition. Just before he left school he came upon Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, and fell abruptly under the influence of that book. In June, 1858, Pater entered Queen's College, Oxford, with a scholarship from his Canterbury school. In 1862 he took his B. A. with a second class in classics. He had long intended to take holy orders, but by this time had abandoned the idea, and for a time he now read with private pupils. In 1863 he was elected a member of the "Old Mortality," an essay society whose membership then included T. H. Green, H. Nettleship, J. Bryce, Edward Caird, and I. Bywater; and through this society Pater also became acquainted with Swinburne. In 1864 he was elected a Fellow of Brasenose College, and at once went into residence there. He held his fellowship and his rooms at Brasenose through the remainder of his life, though in later years he also maintained, with his sisters, a house in Oxford, and, for a brief period, one in London. He generally spent his long vacations in Germany or northern France, and in 1865 he went to Italy with his friend C. L. Shadwell. In 1882 he also spent the winter in Rome. Save for these journeys and the publication of his essays and books Pater's life was

uneventful. He was attacked by rheumatic fever in June, 1894, and died suddenly on the following 30 July. He was buried in the cemetery of St. Giles, Oxford.

Pater may be termed the philosopher of the modern or neo-romantic school of Rossetti, Swinburne, and Morris. He sought to think through what they felt and expressed in poetry and art. He saw that their attitude towards life coincided with what, one might contend, was the great lesson of modern philosophy and science in their progress away from ancient and medieval confidence in the ability of human reason to penetrate reality, and in their conclusion that the intellectual life of man is bounded by the impressions of the senses. He concluded that if the sole stuff of life is sense-impressions, Rossetti and his followers were right in their implication that life is fundamentally a problem in aesthetics. Consequently Pater attempted to found an æsthetic criticism in a series of studies and imaginary portraits, the more important of which are contained in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), *Imaginary Portraits* (1887), and *Appreciations* (1889). His lectures on *Plato and Platonism* (1893) are in reality, though less obviously, an effort in the same kind. And his longest and most carefully wrought work, *Marius the Epicurean* (1885)—to which he gave six years of sustained labor—contains his full exposition, in a form at once literary and meditative, of his æsthetic Epicureanism. Pater's work taken as a whole thus has an important historical interest, and, in addition, his books are full of the rare charm and rightness of a very distinguished and finely cultivated mind. Pater's readers are inevitably struck by his humanity, by the unobtrusiveness of his scholarship, by his never-failing good taste, and by his gift—amounting to genius—for the precise expression of his meaning.

### CONCLUSION<sup>1</sup>

Λέγει που 'Ηράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει.<sup>2</sup>

TO REGARD all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1868 and printed at the end of *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* in 1873. It was omitted from the second edition of that book (1877), but restored in the third edition (1888) with the following note: "This brief Conclusion was omitted in the second edition of this book, as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose

more become the tendency of modern thought. Let us begin with that which is without—our physical life. Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, the moment, for instance,

hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning. I have dealt more fully in *Marius the Epicurean* with the thoughts suggested by it." The Conclusion and the two following pieces by Pater are here reprinted with the permission of the Macmillan Company.

<sup>2</sup>Heraclitus says that all things give way and nothing remains (Plato, *Cratylus*).



of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat. What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names? But those elements, phosphorus and lime and delicate fibers, are present not in the human body alone: we detect them in places most remote from it. Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them—the passage of the blood, the waste and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain under every ray of light and sound—processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces. Like the elements of which we are composed, the action of these forces extends beyond us: it rusts iron and ripens corn. Far out on every side of us those elements are broadcast, driven in many currents; and birth and gesture<sup>1</sup> and death and the springing of violets from the grave are but a few out of ten thousand resultant combinations. That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them—a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it. This at least of flamelike our life has, that it is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways.

Or if we begin with the inward world of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring. There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye, the gradual fading of color from the wall—movements of the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest—but the race of the midstream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought. At first sight experience seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, pressing upon us with a sharp and importunate reality, calling us out of ourselves in a thousand forms of action. But when reflection begins to play upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence; the cohesive force seems suspended like some trick of magic; each object is loosed into a group of impressions—color, odor, texture—in the mind of the observer. And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impressions, unstable, flickering, inconsistent, which burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them, it contracts still further: the whole scope of observation is dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind. Experience, already reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world. Analysis goes a step farther still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also, all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it, of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is. To such a tremulous wisp constantly reforming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it, a relic more or less fleeting, of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down. It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off—that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

*Philosophiren*, says Novalis, *ist dephegmatisiren vivificiren*.<sup>2</sup> The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us,—for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where

<sup>2</sup>To be a philosopher is to rid one's self of inertia, to become alive. (Novalis was the pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg, 1772-1801).

<sup>1</sup>Bearing, behavior.

the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits: for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike. While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colors, and curious odors, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. With this sense of the splendor of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch.

What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own. Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us. "Philosophy is the microscope of thought." The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves, or of what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us.

One of the most beautiful passages of Rousseau is that in the sixth book of the *Confessions* where he describes the awakening in him of the literary sense. An undefinable taint of death had clung always about him, and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by mortal disease. He asked himself how he might make as much as possible of the interval that remained; and he was not biased by anything in his previous life when he decided that it must be by intellectual excitement, which he found just then in the clear, fresh writings of Voltaire. Well! we are all con-

damnés, as Victor Hugo says: we are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve—*les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis*: we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest, at least among "the children of this world," in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us. Only be sure it is passion—that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of such wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most. For art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

## POSTSCRIPT<sup>1</sup>

THE words, *classical* and *romantic*, although, like many other critical expressions, sometimes abused by those who have understood them too vaguely or too absolutely, yet define two real tendencies in the history of art and literature. Used in an exaggerated sense, to express a greater opposition between those tendencies than really exists, they have at times tended to divide people of taste into opposite camps. But in that *House Beautiful*, which the creative minds of all generations—the artists and those who have treated life in the spirit of art—are always building together, for the refreshment of the human spirit, these oppositions cease; and the *Interpreter* of the *House Beautiful*, the true æsthetic critic, uses these divisions, only so far as they enable him to enter into the peculiarities of the objects with which he has to do. The term *classical*, fixed, as it is, to a well-defined literature, and a well-defined group in art, is clear, indeed; but then it has often been used in a hard, and merely scholastic sense, by the praisers of what is old and accustomed, at the expense of what is new, by critics who would

<sup>1</sup>Published with the title *Romanticism in Macmillan's Magazine*, November, 1876. In 1880 reprinted with its present title as the final essay in *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style*.

never have discovered for themselves the charm of any work, whether new or old, who value what is old, in art or literature, for its accessories, and chiefly for the conventional authority that has gathered about it—people who would never really have been made glad by any Venus fresh-risen from the sea, and who praise the Venus of old Greece and Rome, only because they fancy her grown now into something staid and tame.

And as the term, *classical*, has been used in a too absolute, and therefore in a misleading sense, so the term, *romantic*, has been used much too vaguely, in various accidental senses. The sense in which Scott is called a romantic writer is chiefly this; that, in opposition to the literary tradition of the last century, he loved strange adventure, and sought it in the Middle Age. Much later, in a Yorkshire village, the spirit of romanticism bore a more really characteristic fruit in the work of a young girl, Emily Brontë, the romance of *Wuthering Heights*; the figures of Hareton Earnshaw, of Catherine Linton, and of Heathcliff—tearing open Catherine's grave, removing one side of her coffin, that he may really lie beside her in death—figures so passionate, yet woven on a background of delicately beautiful, moorland scenery, being typical examples of that spirit. In Germany, again, that spirit is shown less in Tieck, its professional representative, than in Meinhold, the author of *Sidonia the Sorceress* and the *Amber-Witch*. In Germany and France, within the last hundred years, the term has been used to describe a particular school of writers; and, consequently, when Heine criticizes the *Romantic School* in Germany—that movement which culminated in Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*; or when Théophile Gautier criticizes the romantic movement in France, where, indeed, it bore its most characteristic fruits, and its play is hardly yet over—where, by a certain audacity, or *bizarrierie* of motive, united with faultless literary execution, it still shows itself in imaginative literature—they use the word, with an exact sense of special artistic qualities, indeed; but use it, nevertheless, with a limited application to the manifestation of those qualities at a particular period. But the romantic spirit is, in reality, an ever-present, an enduring principle, in the artistic temperament; and the qualities of thought and style which that, and other similar uses of the word

*romantic* really indicate, are indeed but symptoms of a very continuous and widely working influence.

Though the words *classical* and *romantic*, then, have acquired an almost technical meaning, in application to certain developments of German and French taste, yet this is but one variation of an old opposition, which may be traced from the very beginning of the formation of European art and literature. From the first formation of anything like a standard of taste in these things, the restless curiosity of their more eager lovers necessarily made itself felt, in the craving for new motives, new subjects of interest, new modifications of style. Hence, the opposition between the classicists and the romanticists—between the adherents, in the culture of beauty, of the principles of liberty, and authority, respectively—of strength, and order or what the Greeks called *κοσμιότης*.<sup>1</sup>

Sainte-Beuve, in the third volume of the *Causeries du Lundi*, has discussed the question, *What is meant by a classic?* It was a question he was well fitted to answer, having himself lived through many phases of taste, and having been in earlier life an enthusiastic member of the romantic school: he was also a great master of that sort of “philosophy of literature,” which delights in tracing traditions in it, and the way in which various phases of thought and sentiment maintain themselves, through successive modifications, from epoch to epoch. His aim, then, is to give the word *classic* a wider and, as he says, a more generous sense than it commonly bears, to make it expressly *grandiose et flottant*;<sup>2</sup> and, in doing this, he develops, in a masterly manner, those qualities of measure, purity, temperance, of which it is the especial function of classical art and literature, whatever meaning, narrower or wider, we attach to the term, to take care.

The charm, therefore, of what is classical, in art or literature, is that of the well-known tale, to which we can, nevertheless, listen over and over again, because it is told so well. To the absolute beauty of its artistic form, is added the accidental, tranquil, charm of familiarity. There are times, indeed, at which these charms fail to work on our spirits at all, because they fail to excite us. “*Ro-*

<sup>1</sup>Decorum.

<sup>2</sup>Large and general.



*manticism*," says Stendhal, "is the art of presenting to people the literary works which, in the actual state of their habits and beliefs, are capable of giving them the greatest possible pleasure; *classicism*, on the contrary, of presenting them with that which gave the greatest possible pleasure to their grandfathers." But then, beneath all changes of habits and beliefs, our love of that mere abstract proportion—of music—which what is classical in literature possesses, still maintains itself in the best of us, and what pleased our grandparents may at least tranquilize us. The "classic" comes to us out of the cool and quiet of other times, as the measure of what a long experience has shown will at least never displease us. And in the classical literature of Greece and Rome, as in the classics of the last century, the essentially classical element is that quality of order in beauty, which they possess, indeed, in a pre-eminent degree, and which impresses some minds to the exclusion of everything else in them.

It is the addition of strangeness to beauty, that constitutes the romantic character in art; and the desire of beauty being a fixed element in every artistic organization, it is the addition of curiosity to this desire of beauty, that constitutes the romantic temper. Curiosity and the desire of beauty, have each their place in art, as in all true criticism. When one's curiosity is deficient, when one is not eager enough for new impressions, and new pleasures, one is liable to value mere academical proprieties too highly, to be satisfied with worn-out or conventional types, with the insipid ornament of Racine, or the prettiness of that later Greek sculpture, which passed so long for true Hellenic work; to miss those places where the handiwork of nature, or of the artist, has been most cunning; to find the most stimulating products of art a mere irritation. And when one's curiosity is in excess; when it overbalances the desire of beauty, then one is liable to value in works of art what is inartistic in them; to be satisfied with what is exaggerated in art, with productions like some of those of the romantic school in Germany; not to distinguish, jealously enough, between what is admirably done, and what is done not quite so well, in the writings, for instance, of Jean Paul.<sup>1</sup> And

if I had to give instances of these defects, then I should say, that Pope, in common with the age of literature to which he belonged, had too little curiosity, so that there is always a certain insipidity in the effect of his work, exquisite as it is; and, coming down to our own time, that Balzac had an excess of curiosity—curiosity not duly tempered with the desire of beauty.

But, however falsely those two tendencies may be opposed by critics, or exaggerated by artists themselves, they are tendencies really at work at all times in art, molding it, with the balance sometimes a little on one side, sometimes a little on the other, generating, respectively, as the balance inclines on this side or that, two principles, two traditions, in art, and in literature so far as it partakes of the spirit of art. If there is a great overbalance of curiosity, then, we have the grotesque in art: if the union of strangeness and beauty, under very difficult and complex conditions, be a successful one, if the union be entire, then the resultant beauty is very exquisite, very attractive. With a passionate care for beauty, the romantic spirit refuses to have it, unless the condition of strangeness be first fulfilled. Its desire is for a beauty born of unlikely elements, by a profound alchemy, by a difficult initiation, by the charm which wrings it even out of terrible things; and a trace of distortion, of the grotesque, may perhaps linger, as an additional element of expression, about its ultimate grace. Its eager, excited spirit will have strength, the grotesque, first of all—the trees shrieking as you tear off the leaves; for Jean Valjean,<sup>2</sup> the long years of convict life; for Redgauntlet,<sup>3</sup> the quicksands of Solway Moss; then, incorporate with this strangeness, and intensified by restraint, as much sweetness, as much beauty, as is compatible with that. *Énergique, frais, et dispos*—these, according to Sainte-Beuve, are the characteristics of a genuine classic—*les ouvrages anciens ne sont pas classiques parce qu'ils sont vieux, mais parce qu'ils sont énergiques, frais, et dispos*.<sup>4</sup> Energy, freshness, intelligent and masterly disposition:—these are characteristics of Victor Hugo when his alchemy is complete, in certain

<sup>1</sup>In Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.

<sup>2</sup>In Scott's *Redgauntlet*.

<sup>3</sup>Ancient literature is not classical because it is old, but because it is spirited, fresh, and well-ordered.

figures, like Marius and Cosette, in certain scenes, like that in the opening of *Les Trouvailleurs de la Mer*, where Déruchette writes the name of *Gilliat* in the snow, on Christmas morning; but always there is a certain note of strangeness discernible there, as well.

The essential elements, then, of the romantic spirit are curiosity and the love of beauty; and it is only as an illustration of these qualities, that it seeks the Middle Age, because, in the overcharged atmosphere of the Middle Age, there are unworked sources of romantic effect, of a strange beauty, to be won, by strong imagination, out of things unlikely or remote.

Few, probably, now read Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*, though it has its interest, the interest which never quite fades out of work really touched with the enthusiasm of the spiritual adventurer, the pioneer in culture. It was published in 1810, to introduce to French readers a new school of writers—the romantic school, from beyond the Rhine; and it was followed, twenty-three years later, by Heine's *Romantische Schule*, as at once a supplement and a correction. Both these books, then, connect romanticism with Germany, with the names especially of Goethe and Tieck; and, to many English readers, the idea of romanticism is still inseparably connected with Germany—that Germany which, in its quaint old towns, under the spire of Strasburg or the towers of Heidelberg, was always listening in rapt inaction to the melodious, fascinating voices of the Middle Age, and which, now that it has got Strasburg back again, has, I suppose, almost ceased to exist. But neither Germany, with its Goethe and Tieck, nor England, with its Byron and Scott, is nearly so representative of the romantic temper as France, with Murger, and Gautier, and Victor Hugo. It is in French literature that its most characteristic expression is to be found; and that, as most closely derivative, historically, from such peculiar conditions, as ever reinforce it to the utmost.

For, although temperament has much to do with the generation of the romantic spirit, and although this spirit, with its curiosity, its thirst for a curious beauty, may be always traceable in excellent art (traceable even in Sophocles), yet still, in a limited sense, it may be said to be a product of special epochs.

Outbreaks of this spirit, that is, come naturally with particular periods—times, when, in men's approaches towards art and poetry, curiosity may be noticed to take the lead, when men come to art and poetry, with a deep thirst for intellectual excitement, after a long *ennui*, or in reaction against the strain of outward, practical things: in the later Middle Age, for instance; so that medieval poetry, centering in Dante, is often opposed to Greek and Roman poetry, as romantic poetry to the classical. What the romanticism of Dante is, may be estimated, if we compare the lines in which Virgil describes the hazel-wood, from whose broken twigs flows the blood of Polydorus, not without the expression of a real shudder at the ghastly incident, with the whole canto of the *Inferno*, into which Dante has expanded them, beautifying and softening it, meanwhile, by a sentiment of profound pity. And it is especially in that period of intellectual disturbance, immediately preceding Dante, amid which the romance languages define themselves at last, that this temper is manifested. Here, in the literature of Provence, the very name of *romanticism* is stamped with its true signification: here we have indeed a romantic world, grotesque even, in the strength of its passions, almost insane in its curious expression of them, drawing all things into its sphere, making the birds, nay! lifeless things, its voices and messengers, yet so penetrated with the desire for beauty and sweetness, that it begets a wholly new species of poetry, in which the *Renaissance* may be said to begin. The last century was pre-eminently a classical age, an age in which, for art and literature, the element of a comely order was in the ascendant; which, passing away, left a hard battle to be fought between the classical and the romantic schools. Yet, it is in the heart of this century, of Goldsmith and Stothard,<sup>1</sup> of Watteau and the *Siècle de Louis XIV*<sup>2</sup>—in one of its central, if not most characteristic figures, in Rousseau—that the modern or French romanticism really originates. But, what in the eighteenth century is but an exceptional phenomenon, breaking through its fair reserve and discretion only at rare intervals, is the habitual guise of the nineteenth, breaking through it perpetually,

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Stothard (1755-1834), English painter and illustrator.

<sup>2</sup>By Voltaire.

with a feverishness, an incomprehensible straining and excitement, which all experience to some degree, but yearning also, in the genuine children of the romantic school, to be *énergique, frais, et dispos*—for those qualities of energy, freshness, comely order; and often, in Murger, in Gautier, in Victor Hugo, for instance, with singular felicity attaining them.

It is in the terrible tragedy of Rousseau, in fact, that French romanticism, with much else, begins: reading his *Confessions* we seem actually to assist at the birth of this new, strong spirit in the French mind. The wildness which has shocked so many, and the fascination which has influenced almost every one, in the squalid, yet eloquent figure, we see and hear so clearly in that book, wandering under the apple-blossoms and among the vines of Neuchâtel or Vevey actually give it the quality of a very successful romantic invention. His strangeness or distortion, his profound subjectivity, his passionateness—the *cor laceratum*<sup>1</sup>—Rousseau makes all men in love with these. *Je ne suis fait comme aucun de ceux que j'ai sus. Mais si je ne voux pas mieux, au moins je suis autre*.—"I am not made like any one else I have ever known: yet, if I am not better, at least I am different." These words, from the first page of the *Confessions*, anticipate all the Werthers, Renés, Obermanns,<sup>2</sup> of the last hundred years. For Rousseau did but anticipate a trouble in the spirit of the whole world; and thirty years afterwards, what in him was a peculiarity, became part of the general consciousness. A storm was coming: Rousseau, with others, felt it in the air, and they helped to bring it down: they introduced a disturbing element into French literature, then so trim and formal, like our own literature of the age of Queen Anne.

In 1815 the storm had come and gone, but had left, in the spirit of "young France," the *ennui* of an immense disillusion. In the last chapter of Edgar Quinet's *Révolution Française*, a work itself full of irony, of disillusion, he distinguishes two books, Senancour's *Obermann* and Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, as characteristic of the first decade of the present century. In those two books we

detect already the disease and the cure—in *Obermann* the irony, refined into a plaintive philosophy of "indifference"—in Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, the refuge from a tarnished actual present, a present of disillusion, into a world of strength and beauty in the Middle Age, as at an earlier period—in *René* and *Atala*—into the free play of them in savage life. It is to minds in this spiritual situation, weary of the present, but yearning for the spectacle of beauty and strength, that the works of French romanticism appeal. They set a positive value on the intense, the exceptional; and a certain distortion is sometimes noticeable in them, as in conceptions like Victor Hugo's *Quasimodo*, or *Gwynplaine*, something of a terrible grotesque, of the *macabre*, as the French themselves call it; though always combined with perfect literary execution, as in Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse*, or the scene of the "maimed" burial-rites of the player, dead of the frost, in his *Capitaine Fracasse*—true "flowers of the yew." It becomes grim humor in Victor Hugo's combat of Gilliatt with the devil-fish, or the incident, with all its ghastly comedy drawn out at length, of the great gun detached from its fastenings on shipboard, in *Quatre-Vingt-Treize* (perhaps the most terrible of all the accidents that can happen by sea) and in the entire episode, in that book, of the *Convention*. Not less surely does it reach a genuine pathos; for the habit of noting and distinguishing one's own intimate passages of sentiment makes one sympathetic, begetting, as it must, the power of entering, by all sorts of finer ways, into the intimate recesses of other minds; so that pity is another quality of romanticism, both Victor Hugo and Gautier being great lovers of animals, and charming writers about them, and Murger being unrivaled in the pathos of his *Scènes de la Vie de Jeunesse*. Penetrating so finely into all situations which appeal to pity, above all, into the special or exceptional phases of such feeling, the romantic humor is not afraid of the quaintness or singularity of its circumstances or expression, pity, indeed, being of the essence of humor; so that Victor Hugo does but turn his romanticism into practice, in his hunger and thirst after practical *Justice*!—a justice which shall no longer wrong children, or animals, for instance, by ignoring in a stupid, mere breadth of view,

<sup>1</sup>Torn heart.

<sup>2</sup>*The Sorrows of Werther*, by Goethe; *René*, by Chateaubriand; *Obermann*, by Senancour.



minute facts about them. Yet the romanticists are antinomian, too, sometimes, because the love of energy and beauty, of distinction in passion, tended naturally to become a little *bizarre*, plunging into the Middle Age, into the secrets of old Italian story. *Are we in the Inferno?*—we are tempted to ask, wondering at something malign in so much beauty. For over all a care for the refreshment of the human spirit by fine art manifests itself, a predominant sense of literary charm, so that, in their search for the secret of exquisite expression, the romantic school went back to the forgotten world of early French poetry, and literature itself became the most delicate of the arts—like “goldsmith’s work,” says Sainte-Beuve, of Bertrand’s *Gaspard de la Nuit*—and that peculiarly French gift, the gift of exquisite speech, *argute loqui*,<sup>1</sup> attained in them a perfection which it had never seen before.

Stendhal, a writer whom I have already quoted, and of whom English readers might well know much more than they do, stands between the earlier and later growths of the romantic spirit. His novels are rich in romantic quality; and his other writings—partly criticism, partly personal reminiscences—are a very curious and interesting illustration of the needs out of which romanticism arose. In his book on *Racine and Shakespeare*, Stendhal argues that all good art was romantic in its day; and this is perhaps true in Stendhal’s sense. That little treatise, full of “dry light” and fertile ideas, was published in the year 1823, and its object is to defend an entire independence and liberty in the choice and treatment of subject, both in art and literature, against those who upheld the exclusive authority of precedent. In pleading the cause of romanticism, therefore, it is the novelty, both of form and of motive, in writings like the *Hernani* of Victor Hugo (which soon followed it, raising a storm of criticism) that he is chiefly concerned to justify. To be interesting and really stimulating, to keep us from yawning even, art and literature must follow the subtle movements of that nimbly-shifting *Time-Spirit*, or *Zeit-Geist*, understood by French not less than by German criticism, which is always modifying men’s taste, as it modifies their manners and

their pleasures. This, he contends, is what all great workmen had always understood. Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, had exercised an absolute independence in their choice of subject and treatment. To turn always with that ever-changing spirit, yet to retain the flavor of what was admirably done in past generations, in the classics, as we say—is the problem of true romanticism. “Dante,” he observes, “was pre-eminently the romantic poet. He adored Virgil, yet he wrote the *Divine Comedy*, with the episode of Ugolino, which is as unlike the *Æneid* as can possibly be. And those who thus obey the fundamental principle of romanticism, one by one become classical, and are joined to that ever-increasing common league, formed by men of all countries, to approach nearer and nearer to perfection.”

Romanticism, then, although it has its epochs, is in its essential characteristics rather a spirit which shows itself at all times, in various degrees, in individual workmen and their work, and the amount of which criticism has to estimate in them taken one by one, than the peculiarity of a time or a school. Depending on the varying proportion of curiosity and the desire of beauty, natural tendencies of the artistic spirit at all times, it must always be partly a matter of individual temperament. The eighteenth century in England has been regarded as almost exclusively a classical period; yet William Blake, a type of so much which breaks through what are conventionally thought the influences of that century, is still a noticeable phenomenon in it, and the reaction in favor of naturalism in poetry begins in that century, early. There are, thus, the born romanticists and the born classicists. There are the born classicists who start with *form*, to whose minds the comeliness of the old, immemorial, well-recognized types in art and literature, have revealed themselves impressively; who will entertain no matter which will not go easily and flexibly into them; whose work aspires only to be a variation upon, or study from, the older masters. “’Tis art’s decline, my son!”<sup>2</sup> they are always saying, to the progressive element in their own generation; to those who care for that which in fifty years’ time every one will be caring for. On the

<sup>1</sup>To speak subtly.

<sup>2</sup>Browning, *Fra Lippo Lippi*, 233.

other hand, there are the born romanticists, who start with an original, untried *matter*, still in fusion; who conceive this vividly, and hold by it as the essence of their work; who, by the very vividness and heat of their conception, purge away, sooner or later, all that is not organically appropriate to it, till the whole effect adjusts itself in clear, orderly, proportionate form; which form, after a very little time, becomes classical in its turn.

The romantic or classical character of a picture, a poem, a literary work, depends, then, on the balance of certain qualities in it; and in this sense, a very real distinction may be drawn between good classical and good romantic work. But all critical terms are relative; and there is at least a valuable suggestion in that theory of Stendhal's, that all good art was romantic in its day. In the beauties of Homer and Pheidias, quiet as they now seem, there must have been, for those who confronted them for the first time, excitement and surprise, the sudden, unforeseen satisfaction of the desire of beauty. Yet the *Odyssey*, with its marvelous adventure, is more romantic than the *Iliad*, which nevertheless contains, among many other romantic episodes, that of the immortal horses of Achilles, who weep at the death of Patroclus. Æschylus is more romantic than Sophocles, whose *Philoctetes*, were it written now, might figure, for the strangeness of its motive and the perfectness of its execution, as typically romantic; while, of Euripides, it may be said, that his method in writing his plays is to sacrifice readily almost everything else, so that he may attain the fullness of a single romantic effect. These two tendencies, indeed, might be applied as a measure or standard, all through Greek and Roman art and poetry, with very illuminating results; and for an analyst of the romantic principle in art, no exercise would be more profitable, than to walk through the collection of classical antiquities at the Louvre, or the British Museum, or to examine some representative collection of Greek coins, and note how the element of curiosity, of the love of strangeness, insinuates itself into classical design, and record the effects of the romantic spirit there, the traces of struggle, of the grotesque even, though over-balanced here by sweetness; as in the sculpture of Chartres and Rheims, the real sweetness of mind in the

sculptor is often overbalanced by the grotesque, by the rudeness of his strength.

Classicism, then, means for Stendhal, for that younger enthusiastic band of French writers whose unconscious method he formulated into principles, the reign of what is pedantic, conventional, and narrowly academic in art; for him, all good art is romantic. To Sainte-Beuve, who understands the term in a more liberal sense, it is the characteristic of certain epochs, of certain spirits in every epoch, not given to the exercise of original imagination, but rather to the working out of refinements of manner on some authorized matter; and who bring to their perfection, in this way, the elements of sanity, of order and beauty in manner. In general criticism, again, it means the spirit of Greece and Rome, of some phases in literature and art that may seem of equal authority with Greece and Rome, the age of Louis the Fourteenth, the age of Johnson; though this is at best an uncritical use of the term, because in Greek and Roman work there are typical examples of the romantic spirit. But explain the terms as we may, in application to particular epochs, there are these two elements always recognizable; united in perfect art—in Sophocles, in Dante, in the highest work of Goethe, though not always absolutely balanced there; and these two elements may be not inappropriately termed the classical and romantic tendencies.

Material for the artist, motives of inspiration, are not yet exhausted: our curious, complex, aspiring age still abounds in subjects for æsthetic manipulation by the literary as well as by other forms of art. For the literary art, at all events, the problem just now is, to induce order upon the contorted, proportionless accumulation of our knowledge and experience, our science and history, our hopes and disillusion, and, in effecting this, to do consciously what has been done hitherto for the most part too unconsciously, to write our English language as the Latins wrote theirs, as the French write, as scholars should write. Appealing, as he may, to precedent in this matter, the scholar will still remember that if "the style is the man" it is also the age: that the nineteenth century too will be found to have had its style, justified by necessity—a style very different, alike from the baldness

of an impossible "Queen Anne" revival, and an incorrect, incondite exuberance, after the mode of Elizabeth: that we can only return to either at the price of an impoverishment of form or matter, or both, although, an intellectually rich age such as ours being necessarily an eclectic one, we may well cultivate some of the excellences of literary types so different as those: that in literature as in other matters it is well to unite as many diverse elements as may be: that the individual writer or artist, certainly, is to be estimated by the number of graces he combines, and his power of interpenetrating them in a given work. To discriminate schools, of art, of literature, is, of course, part of the obvious business of literary criticism: but, in the work of literary production, it is easy to be overmuch occupied concerning them. For, in truth, the legitimate contention is, not of one age or school of literary art against another, but of all successive schools alike, against the stupidity which is dead to the substance, and the vulgarity which is dead to form.

### THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE<sup>1</sup>

AS FLORIAN DELEAL walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighborhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall and floor, and

some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit—in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favorable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualized house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there—of which indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture—half, tint and trace and accident of homely color and form, from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their lives), really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates—descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the rooms—might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there—the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went

<sup>1</sup>Published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, August, 1878, with the title, "Imaginary Portrait. The Child in the House." Reprinted in *Miscellaneous Studies* (1895).



round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fireplace of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight—an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures, glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of colored silks, among its lumber—a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighboring steeples; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is false to suppose that a child's sense of beauty is dependent on any choiceness or special fineness, in the objects which present themselves to it, though this indeed comes to be the rule with most of us in later life; earlier, in some degree, we see inwardly; and the child finds for itself, and with unstinted delight, a difference for the sense, in those whites and reds through the smoke on very homely buildings, and in the gold of the dandelions at the road-side, just beyond the houses, where not a handful of earth is virgin and untouched, in the lack of better ministries to its desire of beauty.

This house then stood not far beyond the gloom and rumors of the town, among high garden-wall, bright all summer-time with Golden-rod, and brown-and-golden Wall-flower—*Flos Parietis*, as the children's Latin-reading father taught them to call it, while he was with them. Tracing back the threads of his complex spiritual habit, as he was used in after years to do, Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally

presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travelers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighboring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darknesses which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells—a citadel of peace in the heart of the trouble—all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognized imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. Also, Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an *urbanity* literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the pale people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite satisfaction in the trimness and well-considered grace of certain things and persons he afterwards met with, here and there, in his way through the world.

So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly; things without thus ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the birdcage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the ease with which he learned, and at the quickness of his memory. The perfume of the little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the air upon them like rain; while time seemed to move ever more slowly to the murmur of the bees in it, till it almost stood still on June afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us; with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as "with lead in the rock for ever,"<sup>1</sup> giving form and feature, and as it were assigned house-room in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise. The realities and passions, the rumors of the greater world without, steal in

<sup>1</sup>Job, xix, 24.

upon us, each by its own special little passage-way, through the wall of custom about us; and never afterwards quite detach themselves from this or that accident, or trick, in the mode of their first entrance to us. Our susceptibilities, the discovery of our powers, manifold experiences—our various experiences of the coming and going of bodily pain, for instance—belong to this or the other well-remembered place in the material habitation—that little white room with the window across which the heavy blossoms could beat so peevishly in the wind, with just that particular catch or throb, such a sense of teasing in it, on gusty mornings; and the early habitation thus gradually becomes a sort of material shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents—the angle at which the sun in the morning fell on the pillow—become parts of the great chain, wherewith we are bound.

Thus far, for Florian, what all this had determined was a peculiarly strong sense of home—so forcible a motive with all of us—prompting to us our customary love of the earth, and the larger part of our fear of death, that revulsion we have from it, as from something strange, untried, unfriendly; though life-long imprisonment, they tell you, and final banishment from home is a thing bitterer still; the looking forward to but a short space, a mere childish *goûter*<sup>1</sup> and dessert of it, before the end, being so great a resource of effort to pilgrims and wayfarers, and the soldier in distant quarters, and lending, in lack of that, some power of solace to the thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at least—dead cheek by dead cheek, and with the rain soaking in upon one from above.

So powerful is this instinct, and yet accidents like those I have been speaking of so mechanically determine it; its essence being indeed the early familiar, as constituting our ideal, or typical conception, of rest and security. Out of so many possible conditions, just this for you and that for me, brings ever the unmistakable realization of the delightful *chez soi*,<sup>2</sup> this for the Englishman, for me and you, with the closely-drawn white curtain and the shaded lamp; that, quite other, for

the wandering Arab, who folds his tent every morning, and makes his sleeping-place among haunted ruins, or in old tombs.

With Florian then the sense of home became singularly intense, his good fortune being that the special character of his home was in itself so essentially home-like. As, after many wanderings I have come to fancy that some parts of Surrey and Kent are, for Englishmen, the true landscape, true home-counties, by right, partly, of a certain earthy warmth in the yellow of the sand below their gorse-bushes, and of a certain gray-blue mist after rain, in the hollows of the hills there, welcome to fatigued eyes, and never seen farther south; so I think that the sort of house I have described, with precisely those proportions of red-brick and green, and with a just perceptible monotony in the subdued order of it, for its distinguishing note, is for Englishmen at least typically home-like. And so for Florian that general human instinct was reinforced by this special homelikeness in the place his wandering soul had happened to light on, as, in the second degree, its body and earthly tabernacle; the sense of harmony between his soul and its physical environment became, for a time at least, like perfectly played music, and the life led there singularly tranquil and filled with a curious sense of self-possession. The love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place, came to count for much in the generation and correcting of his thoughts, and afterwards as a salutary principle of restraint in all his wanderings of spirit. The wistful yearning towards home, in absence from it, as the shadows of evening deepened and he followed in thought what was doing there from hour to hour, interpreted to him much of a yearning and regret he experienced afterwards, towards he knew not what, out of strange ways of feeling and thought in which, from time to time, his spirit found itself alone; and in the tears shed in such absences there seemed always to be some soul-subduing foretaste of what his last tears might be.

And the sense of security could hardly have been deeper, the quiet of the child's soul being one with the quiet of its home, a place "inclosed" and "sealed." But upon this assured place, upon the child's assured soul which resembled it, there came floating in from the

<sup>1</sup>Luncheon.

<sup>2</sup>Homelikeness (at one's home).



larger world without, as at windows left ajar unknowingly, or over the high garden walls, two streams of impressions, the sentiments of beauty and pain—recognitions of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of things, as a very real and somewhat tyrannous element in them—and of the sorrow of the world, of grown people and children and animals, as a thing not to be put by in them. From this point he could trace two predominant processes of mental change in him—the growth of an almost diseased sensibility to the spectacle of suffering, and, parallel with this, the rapid growth of a certain capacity of fascination by bright color and choice form—the sweet curvings, for instance, of the lips of those who seemed to him comely persons, modulated in such delicate unison to the things they said or sang,—marking early the activity in him of a more than customary sensuousness, “the lust of the eye,” as the Preacher<sup>1</sup> says, which might lead him, one day, how far! Could he have foreseen the weariness of the way! In music sometimes the two sorts of impressions came together, and he would weep, to the surprise of older people. Tears of joy too the child knew, also to older people’s surprise; real tears, once, of relief from long-strung, childish expectation, when he found returned at evening, with new roses in her cheeks, the little sister who had been to a place where there was a wood, and brought back for him a treasure of fallen acorns, and black crow’s feathers, and his peace at finding her again near him mingled all night with some intimate sense of the distant forest, the rumor of its breezes, with the glossy blackbirds aslant and the branches lifted in them, and of the perfect nicety of the little cups that fell. So those two elementary apprehensions of the tenderness and of the color in things grew apace in him, and were seen by him afterwards to send their roots back into the beginnings of life.

Let me note first some of the occasions of his recognition of the element of pain in things—incidents, now and again, which seemed suddenly to awake in him the whole force of that sentiment which Goethe has called the *Weltschmerz*, and in which the concentrated sorrow of the world seemed

suddenly to lie heavy upon him. A book lay in an old book-case, of which he cared to remember one picture—a woman sitting, with hands bound behind her, the dress, the cap, the hair, folded with a simplicity which touched him strangely, as if not by her own hands, but with some ambiguous care of the hands of others—Queen Marie Antoinette, on her way to execution—we all remember David’s<sup>2</sup> drawing, meant merely to make her ridiculous. The face that had been so high had learned to be mute and resistless; but out of its very resistlessness, seemed now to call on men to have pity, and forbear; and he took note of that, as he closed the book, as a thing to look at again, if he should at any time find himself tempted to be cruel. Again, he would never quite forget the appeal in the small sister’s face, in the garden under the lilacs, terrified at a spider lighted on her sleeve. He could trace back to the look then noted a certain mercy he conceived always for people in fear, even of little things, which seemed to make him, though but for a moment capable of almost any sacrifice of himself. Impressible, susceptible persons, indeed, who had had their sorrows, lived about him; and this sensibility was due in part to the tacit influence of their presence, enforcing upon him habitually the fact that there are those who pass their days, as a matter of course, in a sort of “going quietly.” Most poignantly of all he could recall, in unfading minutest circumstance, the cry on the stair, sounding bitterly through the house, and struck into his soul for ever, of an aged woman, his father’s sister, come now to announce his death in distant India; how it seemed to make the aged woman like a child again; and, he knew not why, but this fancy was full of pity to him. There were the little sorrows of the dumb animals too—of the white angora, with a dark tail like an ermine’s, and a face like a flower, who fell into a lingering sickness, and became quite delicately human in its valetudinarianism, and came to have a hundred different expressions of voice—how it grew worse and worse, till it began to feel the light too much for it, and at last, after one wild morning of pain, the little soul flickered away from the body, quite worn

<sup>1</sup>Ecclesiastes. There are several passages which might have suggested the quoted phrase to Pater, but its words are his own.

<sup>2</sup>Jacques Louis David (1748–1825), court-painter to Louis XVI, supporter of the Revolution, and court-painter to Napoleon.



to death already, and now but feebly retaining it.

So he wanted another pet; and as there were starlings about the place, which could be taught to speak, one of them was caught, and he meant to treat it kindly; but in the night its young ones could be heard crying after it, and the responsive cry of the mother-bird towards them; and at last, with the first light, though not till after some debate with himself, he went down and opened the cage, and saw a sharp bound of the prisoner up to her nestlings; and therewith came the sense of remorse,—that he too was become an accomplice in moving, to the limit of his small power, the springs and handles of that great machine in things, constructed so ingeniously to play pain-fugues on the delicate nerve-work of living creatures.

I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird's-nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws, compact at last, little accidents have their consequence; and thus it happened that, as he walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but a few green leaves thereon—a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall, and he had wondered what might be behind it, and was now allowed to fill his arms with the flowers—flowers enough for all the old blue-china pots along the chimney-piece, making *fête* in the children's room. Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily-laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams all night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers, which seemed to open ruddily in thick, fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the banks on either side. Always afterwards summer by summer, as the flowers came on, the blossom of the red hawthorn still seemed to him absolutely the reddest of all things; and the goodly crimson, still alive in the works of old Venetian masters or old Flemish tapestries, called out always from

afar the recollection of the flame in those perishing little petals, as it pulsed gradually out of them, kept long in the drawers of an old cabinet. Also then, for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free. A touch of regret or desire mingled all night with the remembered presence of the red flowers, and their perfume in the darkness about him; and the longing for some undivined entire possession of them was the beginning of a revelation to him, growing ever clearer, with the coming of the gracious summer guise of fields and trees and persons in each succeeding year, of a certain, at times seemingly exclusive, predominance in his interests, of beautiful physical things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensible vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things, real enough to be of any weight or reckoning, in his house of thought. There were times when he could think of the necessity he was under of associating all thoughts to touch and sight, as a sympathetic link between himself and actual, feeling, living objects; a protest in favor of real men and women against mere gray, unreal abstractions; and he remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if so it be, of our human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us, and welcomed this thought as a kind of keeper and sentinel over his soul therein. But certainly, he came more and more to be unable to care for, or think of soul but as in an actual body, or of any world but that wherein are water and trees, and where men and women look,

so or so, and press actual hands. It was the trick even his pity learned, fastening those who suffered in anywise to his affections by a kind of sensible attachments. He would think of Julian, fallen into incurable sickness, as spoiled in the sweet blossom of his skin like pale amber, and his honey-like hair; of Cecil, early dead, as cut off from the lilies, from golden summer days, from women's voices; and then what comforted him a little was the thought of the turning of the child's flesh to violets in the turf above him. And thinking of the very poor, it was not the things which most men care most for that he yearned to give them; but fairer roses, perhaps, and power to taste quite as they will, at their ease and not task-burdened, a certain desirable, clear light in the new morning, through which sometimes he had noticed them, quite unconscious of it, on their way to their early toil.

So he yielded himself to these things, to be played upon by them like a musical instrument, and began to note with deepening watchfulness, but always with some puzzled, unutterable longing in his enjoyment, the phases of the seasons and of the growing or waning day, down even to the shadowy changes wrought on bare wall or ceiling—the light cast up from the snow, bringing out their darkest angles; the brown light in the cloud, which meant rain; that almost too austere clearness, in the protracted light of the lengthening day, before warm weather began, as if it lingered but to make a severer work-day, with the school-books opened earlier and later; that beam of June sunshine, at last, as he lay awake before the time, a way of gold-dust across the darkness; all the humming, the freshness, the perfume of the garden seemed to lie upon it—and coming in one afternoon in September, along the red gravel walk, to look for a basket of yellow crab-apples left in the cool, old parlor, he remembered it the more, and how the colors struck upon him, because a wasp on one bitten apple stung him, and he felt the passion of sudden, severe pain. For this too brought its curious reflections; and, in relief from it, he would wonder over it—how it had then been with him—puzzled at the depth of the charm or spell over him, which lay, for a little while at least, in the mere absence of pain; once, especially, when an older boy taught him to make flowers of sealing-wax, and he had burned his hand

badly at the lighted taper, and been unable to sleep. He remembered that also afterwards, as a sort of typical thing—a white vision of heat about him, clinging closely, through the languid scent of the ointments put upon the place to make it well.

Also, as he felt this pressure upon him of the sensible world, then, as often afterwards, there would come another sort of curious questioning how the last impressions of eye and ear might happen to him, how they would find him—the scent of the last flower, the soft yellowness of the last morning, the last recognition of some object of affection, hand or voice; it could not be but that the latest look of the eyes, before their final closing, would be strangely vivid; one would go with the hot tears, the cry, the touch of the wistful bystander, impressed how deeply on one! or would it be, perhaps, a mere frail retiring of all things, great or little, away from one, into a level distance?

For with this desire of physical beauty mingled itself early the fear of death—the fear of death intensified by the desire of beauty. Hitherto he had never gazed upon dead faces, as sometimes, afterwards, at the *Morgue* in Paris, or in that fair cemetery at Munich, where all the dead must go and lie in state before burial, behind glass windows, among the flowers and incense and holy candles—the aged clergy with their sacred ornaments, the young men in their dancing-shoes and spotless white linen—after which visits, those waxen resistless faces would always live with him for many days, making the broadest sunshine sickly. The child had heard indeed of the death of his father, and how, in the Indian station, a fever had taken him, so that though not in action he had yet died as a soldier; and hearing of the “resurrection of the just,”<sup>1</sup> he could think of him as still abroad in the world, somehow, for his protection—a grand, though perhaps rather terrible figure, in beautiful soldier's things, like the figure in the picture of Joshua's Vision in the Bible<sup>2</sup>—and of that, round which the mourners moved so softly, and afterwards with such solemn singing, as but a worn-out garment left at a deserted lodging. So it was, until on a summer day he walked with his mother through a fair churchyard. In a bright dress he rambled

<sup>1</sup>St. Luke, xiv, 14.

<sup>2</sup>Joshua, v, 13-14.



among the graves, in the gay weather, and so came, in one corner, upon an open grave for a child—a dark space on the brilliant grass—the black mold lying heaped up round it, weighing down the little jeweled branches of the dwarf rose-bushes in flower. And there-with came, full-grown, never wholly to leave him, with the certainty that even children do sometimes die, the physical horror of death, with its wholly selfish recoil from the association of lower forms of life, and the suffocating weight above. No benign, grave figure in beautiful soldier's things any longer abroad in the world for his protection! only a few poor, piteous bones; and above them, possibly, a certain sort of figure he hoped not to see. For sitting one day in the garden below an open window, he heard people talking, and could not but listen, how, in a sleepless hour, a sick woman had seen one of the dead sitting beside her, come to call her hence; and from the broken talk evolved with much clearness the notion that not all those dead people had really departed to the churchyard, nor were quite so motionless as they looked, but led a secret, half-fugitive life in their old homes, quite free by night, though sometimes visible in the day, dodging from room to room, with no great good will towards those who shared the place with them. All night the figure sat beside him in the reveries of his broken sleep, and was not quite gone in the morning—an odd, irreconcilable new member of the household, making the sweet familiar chambers unfriendly and suspect by its uncertain presence. He could have hated the dead he had pitied so, for being thus. Afterwards he came to think of those poor, home-returning ghosts, which all men have fancied to themselves—the *revenants*—pathetically, as crying, or beating with vain hands at the doors, as the wind came, their cries distinguishable in it as a wilder inner note. But, always making death more unfamiliar still, that old experience would ever, from time to time, return to him; even in the living he sometimes caught its likeness; at any time or place, in a moment, the faint atmosphere of the chamber of death would be breathed around him, and the image with the bound chin, the quaint smile, the straight, stiff feet, shed itself across the air upon the bright carpet, amid the gayest company, or happiest communing with himself.

To most children the somber questionings to which impressions like these attach themselves, if they come at all, are actually suggested by religious books, which therefore they often regard with much secret distaste, and dismiss, as far as possible, from their habitual thoughts as a too depressing element in life. To Florian such impressions, these misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of the years, of the relationship between life and death, had been suggested spontaneously in the natural course of his mental growth by a strong innate sense for the soberer tones in things, further strengthened by actual circumstances; and religious sentiment, that system of biblical ideas in which he had been brought up, presented itself to him as a thing that might soften and dignify, and light up as with a "lively hope,"<sup>1</sup> a melancholy already deeply settled in him. So he yielded himself easily to religious impressions, and with a kind of mystical appetite for sacred things; the more as they came to him through a saintly person who loved him tenderly, and believed that this early pre-occupation with them already marked the child out for a saint. He began to love, for their own sakes, church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen, and holy vessels, and fonts of pure water; and its hieratic purity and simplicity became the type of something he desired always to have about him in actual life. He pored over the pictures in religious books, and knew by heart the exact mode in which the wrestling angel grasped Jacob, how Jacob looked in his mysterious sleep, how the bells and pomegranates were attached to the hem of Aaron's vestment,<sup>2</sup> sounding sweetly as he glided over the turf of the holy place. His way of conceiving religion came then to be in effect what it ever afterwards remained—a sacred history indeed, but still more a sacred ideal, a transcendent version or representation, under intenser and more expressive light and shade, of human life and its familiar or exceptional incidents, birth, death, marriage, youth, age, tears, joy, rest, sleep, waking—a mirror, towards which men might turn away their eyes from vanity and dullness, and see themselves therein as angels, with their daily meat and drink, even, become a kind of sacred transaction—a com-

<sup>1</sup> I Peter, i, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis, xxxii, 24; xxviii, 11; Exodus, xxviii, 35.



plementary strain or burden,<sup>1</sup> applied to our every-day existence, whereby the stray snatches of music in it re-set themselves, and fall into the scheme of some higher and more consistent harmony. A place adumbrated itself in his thoughts, wherein those sacred personalities, which are at once the reflex and the pattern of our nobler phases of life, housed themselves; and this region in his intellectual scheme all subsequent experience did but tend still further to realize and define. Some ideal, hieratic persons he would always need to occupy it and keep a warmth there. And he could hardly understand those who felt no such need at all, finding themselves quite happy without such heavenly companionship, and sacred double of their life, beside them.

Thus a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts. Angels might be met by the way, under English elm or beech-tree; mere messengers seemed like angels, bound on celestial errands; a deep mysticity brooded over real meetings and partings; marriages were made in heaven; and deaths also, with hands of angels thereupon, to bear soul and body quietly asunder, each to its appointed rest. All the acts and accidents of daily life borrowed a sacred color and significance; the very colors of things became themselves weighty with meanings like the sacred stuffs of Moses' tabernacle,<sup>2</sup> full of penitence or peace. Sentiment, congruous in the first instance only with those divine transactions, the deep, effusive unction of the House of Bethany, was assumed as the due attitude for the reception of our every-day existence; and for a time he walked through the world in a sustained, not unpleasurable awe, generated by the habitual recognition, beside every circumstance and event of life, of its celestial correspondent.

Sensibility—the desire of physical beauty—

a strange biblical awe, which made any reference to the unseen act on him like solemn music—these qualities the child took away with him, when, at about the age of twelve years, he left the old house, and was taken to live in another place. He had never left home before, and, anticipating much from this change, had long dreamed over it, jealously counting the days till the time fixed for departure should come; had been a little careless about others even, in his strong desire for it—when Lewis fell sick, for instance, and they must wait still two days longer. At last the morning came, very fine; and all things—the very pavement with its dust, at the roadside—seemed to have a white, pearl-like luster in them. They were to travel by a favorite road on which he had often walked a certain distance, and on one of those two prisoner days, when Lewis was sick, had walked farther than ever before, in his great desire to reach the new place. They had started and gone a little way when a pet bird was found to have been left behind, and must even now—so it presented itself to him—have already all the appealing fierceness and wild self-pity at heart of one left by others to perish of hunger in a closed house; and he returned to fetch it, himself in hardly less stormy distress. But as he passed in search of it from room to room, lying so pale, with a look of meekness in their denudation, and at last through that little, stripped white room, the aspect of the place touched him like the face of one dead; and a clinging back towards it came over him, so intense that he knew it would last long, and spoiling all his pleasure in the realization of a thing so eagerly anticipated. And so, with the bird found, but himself in an agony of homesickness, thus capriciously sprung up within him, he was driven quickly away, far into the rural distance, so fondly speculated on, of that favorite country-road.

<sup>1</sup>Bass under-part.

<sup>2</sup>Exodus, xxvi.

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894)

Stevenson was born in Edinburgh on 13 November, 1850. He was the only child of his parents, and his health was infirm from the beginning of his life. Through his boyhood and youth he suffered from frequent bronchial affections and acute nervous excitability, and was thus prevented from getting much regular or continuous schooling. From 1862 until 1867 he spent much time in travel on the Continent. In the latter year he entered Edinburgh University and for several years attended classes there with such regularity as his health permitted. He read widely, but did not give much attention to routine college studies. He came of a family of distinguished engineers and was expected to follow this profession. Some of his university studies were directed to this end, but in 1871 his family agreed that his health would not allow of his becoming an engineer, and concluded that he should study the law. He accordingly did study the law in a desultory fashion and was called to the bar in 1875, but he never attempted to practice. Outwardly his life had been hitherto, and was still to be for several years, that of a semi-invalid and idler, but in reality Stevenson was attempting with the utmost industry to learn the art of writing. And in 1876 the fruits of his industry began to appear, in the shape of a series of essays contributed to the *Cornhill Magazine*. Two years later his first book was published, *An Inland Voyage*, an account of a canoe-trip in Belgium and France. A few critical readers, such as Leslie Stephen, promptly recognized Stevenson's promise, perceiving that he "aimed at, and often achieved, those qualities of sustained precision, lucidity, and grace of style which are characteristic of the best French prose, but in English rare in the extreme. He had known how to stamp all he wrote with the impress of a vivid personal charm; had shown himself a master of the apt and animated phrase; and whether in tale or parable, essay or wayside musing, had touched on vital points of experience and feel-

ing with the observation and insight of a true poet and humorist" (S. Colvin, *D. N. B.*). Nevertheless Stevenson did not for several years win a large audience, and then did so, in 1882, with a story written for boys, *Treasure Island*.

Meanwhile Stevenson had met in France Mrs. Fanny Osbourne, an American woman then separated from her husband. In 1878 Mrs. Osbourne went to California and in the following year Stevenson determined to follow her. The journey was exceedingly hard on him and would probably have cost him his life had it not been for the careful nursing of Mrs. Osbourne. By 1880 Mrs. Osbourne had secured a divorce from her husband and was married to Stevenson, who took her back to his home in Scotland in August of that year. She herself had delicate health, but she proved a perfect companion for Stevenson and was through the remainder of his life his devoted nurse. His nurse—for Stevenson never won his battle against consumption, but only delayed the end while he continued despite all ills to write, and write, and write. For several years he continued to seek health, or at least a respite from his disease, at various places in Europe, and then in 1887 sailed for America on the same quest. He spent the winter of 1887-1888 at Saranac Lake in the Adirondacks. In the following June he sailed from San Francisco on a voyage among the island groups of the South Sea; and there he established himself in Samoa, where he remained until his death on 4 December, 1894.

Stevenson's life was one of heroic endeavor in the face of constant illness, with the threat of death ever hovering above him. A few of his many books, in addition to those mentioned above, are: *Travels with a Donkey* (1879), *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881), *Familiar Studies of Men and Books* (1882), *The New Arabian Nights* (1882), *Kidnapped* (1886), *Memories and Portraits* (1887), *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889), and *Across the Plains* (1892).

### AN APOLOGY FOR IDLERS<sup>1</sup>

BOSWELL: We grow weary when idle.

JOHNSON: That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company; but if we were all idle, there would be no growing weary; we should all entertain one another.<sup>2</sup>

JUST now, when every one is bound, under pain of a decree in absence convicting them

of lèse-respectability, to enter on some lucrative profession, and labor therein with something not far short of enthusiasm, a cry from the opposite party who are content when they have enough, and like to look on and enjoy in the meanwhile, savors a little of bravado and

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1877; reprinted in the volume entitled *Virginibus Puerisque*. This and the two following pieces by Stevenson are here reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>2</sup>Boswell's *Johnson* (Hill's edition, N. Y.), II, 113.

gasconade. And yet this should not be. Idleness so called, which does not consist in doing nothing, but in doing a great deal not recognized in the dogmatic formularies of the ruling class, has as good a right to state its position as industry itself. It is admitted that the presence of people who refuse to enter in the great handicap race for sixpenny pieces, is at once an insult and a disenchantment for those who do. A fine fellow (as we see so many) takes his determination, votes for the sixpences, and in the emphatic Americanism, "goes for" them. And while such an one is plowing distressfully up the road, it is not hard to understand his resentment, when he perceives cool persons in the meadows by the wayside, lying with a handkerchief over their ears and a glass at their elbow. Alexander is touched in a very delicate place by the disgrace of Diogenes. Where was the glory of having taken Rome for these tumultuous barbarians, who poured into the Senate house, and found the Fathers sitting silent and unmoved by their success? It is a sore thing to have labored along and scaled the arduous hilltops, and when all is done, find humanity indifferent to your achievement. Hence physicists condemn the unphysical; financiers have only a superficial toleration for those who know little of stocks; literary persons despise the unlettered; and people of all pursuits combine to disparage those who have none.

But though this is one difficulty of the subject, it is not the greatest. You could not be put in prison for speaking against industry, but you can be sent to Coventry for speaking like a fool. The greatest difficulty with most subjects is to do them well; therefore, please to remember this is an apology. It is certain that much may be judiciously argued in favor of diligence; only there is something to be said against it, and that is what, on the present occasion, I have to say. To state one argument is not necessarily to be deaf to all others, and that a man has written a book of travels in Montenegro, is no reason why he should never have been to Richmond.

It is surely beyond a doubt that people should be a good deal idle in youth. For though here and there a Lord Macaulay may escape from school honors with all his wits about him, most boys pay so dear for their medals that they never afterward have a shot

in their locker, and begin the world bankrupt. And the same holds true during all the time a lad is educating himself, or suffering others to educate him. It must have been a very foolish old gentleman who addressed Johnson at Oxford in these words: "Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task." The old gentleman seems to have been unaware that many other things besides reading grow irksome, and not a few become impossible, by the time a man has to use spectacles and cannot walk without a stick. Books are good enough in their own way, but they are a mighty bloodless substitute for life. It seems a pity to sit, like the Lady of Shalott, peering into a mirror, with your back turned on all the bustle and glamour of reality. And if a man reads very hard, as the old anecdote reminds us, he will have little time for thoughts.

If you look back on your own education, I am sure it will not be the full, vivid, instructive hours of truancy that you regret; you would rather cancel some lack-luster periods between sleep and waking in the class. For my own part, I have attended a good many lectures in my time. I still remember that the spinning of a top is a case of Kinetic Stability. I still remember that Emphyteusis<sup>1</sup> is not a disease, nor Stillicide<sup>2</sup> a crime. But though I would not willingly part with such scraps of science, I do not set the same store by them as by certain other odds and ends that I came by in the open street while I was playing truant. This is not the moment to dilate on that mighty place of education, which was the favorite school of Dickens and Balzac, and turns out yearly many inglorious masters in the Science of the Aspects of Life. Suffice it to say this: if a lad does not learn in the streets, it is because he has no faculty of learning. Nor is the truant always in the streets, for if he prefers, he may go out by the gardened suburbs into the country. He may pitch on some tuft of lilacs over a burn, and smoke innumerable pipes to the tune of the water on the stones. A bird will

<sup>1</sup>A kind of conditional grant of a right to the possession and enjoyment of land.

<sup>2</sup>A continual falling or succession of drops. In Roman law, the right to have rain from one's roof drop on another's land or roof, or the right to refuse to allow rain from another's roof to drop on one's own land or roof.



sing in the thicket. And there he may fall into a vein of kindly thought, and see things in a new perspective. Why, if this be not education, what is? We may conceive Mr. Worldly Wiseman accosting such an one, and the conversation that should thereupon ensue:

"How now, young fellow, what dost thou here?"

"Truly, sir, I take mine ease."

"Is not this the hour of the class? and should'st thou not be plying thy Book with diligence, to the end thou mayest obtain knowledge?"

"Nay, but thus also I follow after Learning, by your leave."

"Learning, quotha! After what fashion, I pray thee? Is it mathematics?"

"No, to be sure."

"Is it metaphysics?"

"Nor that."

"Is it some language?"

"Nay, it is no language."

"Is it a trade?"

"Nor a trade neither."

"Why, then, what is't?"

"Indeed, sir, as a time may soon come for me to go upon Pilgrimage, I am desirous to note what is commonly done by persons in my case, and where are the ugliest Sloughs and Thickets on the Road; as also, what manner of Staff is of the best service. Moreover, I lie here, by this water, to learn by root-of-heart a lesson which my master teaches me to call Peace, or Contentment."

Hereupon Mr. Worldly Wiseman was much commoved with passion, and shaking his cane with a very threatening countenance, broke forth upon this wise: "Learning, quotha!" said he; "I would have all such rogues scourged by the Hangman!"

And so he would go his way, ruffling out his cravat with a crackle of starch, like a turkey when it spread its feathers.

Now this, of Mr. Wiseman's, is the common opinion. A fact is not called a fact, but a piece of gossip, if it does not fall into one of your scholastic categories. An inquiry must be in some acknowledged direction, with a name to go by; or else you are not inquiring at all, only lounging; and the workhouse is too good for you. It is supposed that all knowledge is at the bottom of a well, or the far end of a telescope. Sainte-Beuve, as he grew

older, came to regard all experience as a single great book, in which to study for a few years ere we go hence; and it seemed all one to him whether you should read in Chapter xx, which is the differential calculus, or in Chapter xxxix, which is hearing the band play in the gardens. As a matter of fact, an intelligent person, looking out of his eyes and hearkening in his ears, with a smile on his face all the time, will get more true education than many another in a life of heroic vigils. There is certainly some chill and arid knowledge to be found upon the summits of formal and laborious science; but it is all round about you, and for the trouble of looking, that you will acquire the warm and palpitating facts of life. While others are filling their memory with a lumber of words, one-half of which they will forget before the week be out, your truant may learn some really useful art: to play the fiddle, to know a good cigar, or to speak with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men. Many who have "plied their book diligently," and know all about some one branch or another of accepted lore, come out of the study with an ancient and owl-like demeanor, and prove dry, stockish, and dyspeptic in all the better and brighter parts of life. Many make a large fortune, who remain underbred and pathetically stupid to the last. And meantime there goes the idler, who began life along with them—by your leave, a different picture. He has had time to take care of his health and his spirits; he has been a great deal in the open air, which is the most salutary of all things for both body and mind; and if he has never read the great Book in very recondite places, he has dipped into it and skimmed it over to excellent purpose. Might not the student afford some Hebrew roots, and the business man some of his half-crowns, for a share of the idler's knowledge of life at large, and Art of Living? Nay, and the idler has another and more important quality than these. I mean his wisdom. He who has much looked on at the childish satisfaction of other people in their hobbies, will regard his own with only a very ironical indulgence. He will not be heard among the dogmatists. He will have a great and cool allowance for all sorts of people and opinions. If he finds no out-of-the-way truths, he will identify himself with no very burning falsehood. His way takes him along a by-road, not much frequented, but very

even and pleasant, which is called Common-place Lane, and leads to the Belvedere<sup>1</sup> of Common-sense. Thence he shall command an agreeable, if no very noble prospect; and while others behold the East and West, the Devil and the Sunrise, he will be contentedly aware of a sort of morning hour upon all sublunary things, with an army of shadows running speedily and in many different directions into the great daylight of Eternity. The shadows and the generations, the shrill doctors and the plangent wars, go by into ultimate silence and emptiness; but underneath all this, a man may see, out of the Belvedere windows, much green and peaceful landscape; many firelit parlors; good people laughing, drinking, and making love as they did before the Flood or the French Revolution; and the old shepherd telling his tale under the hawthorn.

Extreme *busyness*, whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality; and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity. There is a sort of dead-alive, hackneyed people about, who are scarcely conscious of living except in the exercise of some conventional occupation. Bring these fellows into the country, or set them aboard ship, and you will see how they pine for their desk or their study. They have no curiosity; they cannot give themselves over to random provocations; they do not take pleasure in the exercise of their faculties for its own sake; and unless Necessity lays about them with a stick, they will even stand still. It is no good speaking to such folk: they *cannot* be idle, their nature is not generous enough; and they pass those hours in a sort of coma, which are not dedicated to furious moping in the gold-mill. When they do not require to go to the office, when they are not hungry and have no mind to drink, the whole breathing world is a blank to them. If they have to wait an hour or so for a train, they fall into a stupid trance with their eyes open. To see them, you would suppose there was nothing to look at and no one to speak with; you would imagine they were paralyzed or alienated;<sup>2</sup> and yet very possibly they are hard workers in their own way, and have good eyesight for a flaw in a deed or a turn of the market. They have been to school and college, but all the time they had their eye on the medal; they have gone about in the world and mixed with clever people, but all the time they were thinking of their own affairs. As if a man's soul were not too small to begin with, they have dwarfed and narrowed theirs by a life of all work and no play; until here they are at forty, with a listless attention, a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another while they wait for the train. Before he was breeched, he might have clambered on the boxes; when he was twenty, he would have stared at the girls; but now the pipe is smoked out, the snuffbox empty, and my gentleman sits bolt upright upon a bench, with lamentable eyes. This does not appeal to me as being Success in Life.

But it is not only the person himself who suffers from his busy habits, but his wife and children, his friends and relations, and down to the very people he sits with in a railway carriage or an omnibus. Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things. And it is not by any means certain that a man's business is the most important thing he has to do. To an impartial estimate it will seem clear that many of the wisest, most virtuous, and most beneficent parts that are to be played upon the Theater of Life are filled by gratuitous performers, and pass, among the world at large, as phases of idleness. For in that Theater, not only the walking gentlemen, singing chambermaids, and diligent fiddlers in the orchestra, but those who look on and clap their hands from the benches, do really play a part and fulfill important offices towards the general result. You are no doubt very dependent on the care of your lawyer and stockbroker, of the guards and signalmen who convey you rapidly from place to place, and the policemen who walk the streets for your protection; but is there not a thought of gratitude in your heart for certain other benefactors who set you smiling when they fall in your way, or season your dinner with good company? Colonel Newcome helped to lose his friend's money; Fred Bayham had an ugly trick of borrowing shirts; and yet they were better people to fall among than Mr. Barnes.<sup>3</sup> And though Falstaff was

<sup>1</sup>A building commanding a fine prospect.

<sup>2</sup>Mentally changed.

<sup>3</sup>Characters in Thackeray's *Newcomes*.

neither sober nor very honest, I think I could name one or two long-faced Barabbases<sup>1</sup> whom the world could better have done without. Hazlitt mentions that he was more sensible of obligation to Northcote,<sup>2</sup> who had never done him anything he could call a service, than to his whole circle of ostentatious friends; for he thought a good companion emphatically the greatest benefactor. I know there are people in the world who cannot feel grateful unless the favor has been done them at the cost of pain and difficulty. But this is a churlish disposition. A man may send you six sheets of letter-paper covered with the most entertaining gossip, or you may pass half an hour pleasantly, perhaps profitably, over an article of his; do you think the service would be greater, if he had made the manuscript in his heart's blood, like a compact with the devil? Do you really fancy you should be more beholden to your correspondent, if he had been damning you all the while for your importunity? Pleasures are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained,<sup>3</sup> and they are twice blest. There must always be two to a kiss, and there may be a score in a jest; but wherever there is an element of sacrifice, the favor is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion. There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor. The other day, a ragged, barefoot boy ran down the street after a marble, with so jolly an air that he set every one he passed into a good-humor; one of these persons, who had been delivered from more than usually black thoughts, stopped the little fellow and gave him some money with this remark: "You see what sometimes comes of looking pleased." If he had looked pleased before, he had now to look both pleased and mystified. For my part, I justify this encouragement of smiling rather than tearful children; I do not wish to pay for tears anywhere but upon the stage; but I am prepared

to deal largely in the opposite commodity. A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good-will; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition;<sup>4</sup> they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Livableness of Life. Consequently, if a person cannot be happy without remaining idle, idle he should remain. It is a revolutionary precept; but thanks to hunger and the workhouse, one not easily to be abused; and within practical limits, it is one of the most incontestable truths in the whole Body of Morality. Look at one of your industrious fellows for a moment, I beseech you. He sows hurry and reaps indigestion; he puts a vast deal of activity out to interest, and receives a large measure of nervous derangement in return. Either he absents himself entirely from all fellowship, and lives a recluse in a garret, with carpet slippers and a leaden inkpot; or he comes among people swiftly and bitterly, in a contraction of his whole nervous system, to discharge some temper before he returns to work. I do not care how much or how well he works, this fellow is an evil feature in other people's lives. They would be happier if he were dead. They could easier do without his services in the Circumlocution Office,<sup>5</sup> than they can tolerate his fractious spirits. He poisons life at the well-head. It is better to be beggared out of hand by a scapegrace nephew, than daily hag-ridden by a peevish uncle.

And what, in God's name, is all this pother about? For what cause do they embitter their own and other people's lives? That a man should publish three or thirty articles a year, that he should finish or not finish his great allegorical picture, are questions of little interest to the world. The ranks of life are full; and although a thousand fall, there are always some to go into the breach. When they told Joan of Arc she should be at home minding women's work, she answered there were plenty to spin and wash. And so, even with your own rare gifts! When nature is "so careless of the single life,"<sup>6</sup> why should

<sup>1</sup>Falstaff appears in *Henry IV, I* and *II*, and in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Barabbas was the robber whose freedom, instead of that of Jesus, the Jews demanded of Pilate.

<sup>2</sup>James Northcote (1746-1831), painter and writer.

<sup>3</sup>See *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, i, 184.

<sup>4</sup>Of Bk. I, Euclid's *Elements*—the Pythagorean theorem.

<sup>5</sup>See Dickens's *Little Dorrit*.

<sup>6</sup>Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, LV, 8.



we coddle ourselves into the fancy that our own is of exceptional importance? Suppose Shakespeare had been knocked on the head some dark night in Sir Thomas Lucy's preserves, the world would have wagged on better or worse, the pitcher gone to the well, the scythe to the corn, and the student to his book; and no one been any the wiser of the loss. There are not many works extant, if you look the alternative all over, which are worth the price of a pound of tobacco to a man of limited means. This is a sobering reflection for the proudest of our earthly vanities. Even a tobacconist may, upon consideration, find no great cause for personal vainglory in the phrase; for although tobacco is an admirable sedative, the qualities necessary for retailing it are neither rare nor precious in themselves. Alas and alas! you may take it how you will, but the services of no single individual are indispensable. Atlas<sup>1</sup> was just a gentleman with a protracted nightmare! And yet you see merchants who go and labor themselves into a great fortune and thence into the bankruptcy court; scribblers who keep scribbling at little articles until their temper is a cross to all who come about them, as though Pharaoh should set the Israelites to make a pin instead of a pyramid; and fine young men who work themselves into a decline, and are driven off in a hearse with white plumes upon it. Would you not suppose these persons had been whispered, by the Master of the Ceremonies, the promise of some momentous destiny? and that this lukewarm bullet on which they play their farces was the bull's eye and center-point of all the universe? And yet it is not so. The ends for which they gave away their priceless youth, for all they know, may be chimerical or hurtful; the glory and riches they expect may never come, or may find them indifferent; and they and the world they inhabit are so inconsiderable that the mind freezes at the thought.

## A GOSSIP ON ROMANCE<sup>2</sup>

IN ANYTHING fit to be called by the name of reading, the process itself should be absorbing and voluptuous; we should gloat over a

book, be rapt clean out of ourselves, and rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest, kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought. The words, if the book be eloquent, should run thenceforward in our ears like the noise of breakers, and the story, if it be a story, repeat itself in a thousand colored pictures to the eye. It was for this last pleasure that we read so closely, and loved our books so dearly, in the bright, troubled period of boyhood. Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain sort of incident, like a pig for truffles. For my part, I liked a story to begin with an old wayside inn where, "towards the close of the year 17—," several gentlemen in three-cocked hats were playing bowls. A friend of mine preferred the Malabar coast in a storm, with a ship beating to windward, and a scowling fellow of herculean proportions striding along the beach; he, to be sure, was a pirate. This was further afield than my home-keeping fancy loved to travel, and designed altogether for a larger canvas than the tales that I affected. Give me a highwayman and I was full to the brim; a Jacobite would do, but the highwayman was my favorite dish. I can still hear that merry clatter of the hoofs along the moonlit lane; night and the coming of the day are still related in my mind with the doings of John Rann or Jerry Abershaw;<sup>3</sup> and the words "postchaise," the "great North road," "ostler," and "nag" still sound in my ears like poetry. One and all, at least, and each with his particular fancy, we read story-books in childhood, not for eloquence or character or thought, but for some quality of the brute incident. That quality was not mere bloodshed or wonder. Although each of these was welcome in its place, the charm for the sake of which we read depended on something different from either. My elders used to read novels aloud; and I can still remember four different passages which I heard, before I was ten, with the same keen and lasting pleasure. One I discovered long afterwards to be the admirable opening of *What Will He Do With It*;<sup>4</sup> it was no wonder I was pleased with that. The other three still remain unidentified. One is a little vague; it was about a dark, tall

<sup>1</sup>Who supported the world on his head.

<sup>2</sup>Published in 1882; reprinted in the volume entitled *Memories and Portraits*.

<sup>3</sup>Highway robbers.

<sup>4</sup>By Bulwer-Lytton, published in 1858.

house at night, and people groping on the stairs by the light that escaped from the open door of a sick-room. In another, a lover left a ball, and went walking in a cool, dewy park, whence he could watch the lighted windows and the figures of the dancers as they moved. This was the most sentimental impression I think I had yet received, for a child is somewhat deaf to the sentimental. In the last, a poet, who had been tragically wrangling with his wife, walked forth on the sea-beach on a tempestuous night and witnessed the horrors of a wreck.<sup>1</sup> Different as they are, all these early favorites have a common note—they have all a touch of the romantic.

Drama is the poetry of conduct, romance the poetry of circumstance. The pleasure that we take in life is of two sorts—the active and the passive. Now we are conscious of a great command over our destiny; anon we are lifted up by circumstance, as by a breaking wave, and dashed we know not how into the future. Now we are pleased by our conduct, anon merely pleased by our surroundings. It would be hard to say which of these modes of satisfaction is the more effective, but the latter is surely the more constant. Conduct is three parts of life, they say; but I think they put it high. There is a vast deal in life and letters both which is not immoral, but simply a-moral; which either does not regard the human will at all, or deals with it in obvious and healthy relations; where the interest turns, not upon what a man shall choose to do, but on how he manages to do it; not on the passionate slips and hesitations of the conscience, but on the problems of the body and of the practical intelligence, in clean, open-air adventure, the shock of arms or the diplomacy of life. With such material as this it is impossible to build a play, for the serious theater exists solely on moral grounds, and is a standing proof of the dissemination of the human conscience. But it is possible to build, upon this ground, the most joyous of verses, and the most lively, beautiful, and buoyant tales.

One thing in life calls for another; there is a fitness in events and places. The sight of a pleasant arbor puts it in our mind to sit there. One place suggests work, another idleness, a third early rising and long rambles

in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it. And many of the happiest hours of life fleet by us in this vain attendance on the genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir, and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race; and when I was a child I tried in vain to invent appropriate games for them, as I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots again seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable, "miching mallecho."<sup>2</sup> The inn at Burford Bridge, with its arbors and green garden and silent, eddying river—though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote some of his *Endymion* and Nelson parted from his Emma<sup>3</sup>—still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind these old green shutters, some further business smolders, waiting for its hour. The old Hawes Inn at the Queen's Ferry makes a similar call upon my fancy. There it stands, apart from the town, beside the pier, in a climate of its own, half inland, half marine—in front, the ferry bubbling with the tide and the guardship swinging to her anchor; behind, the old garden with the trees. Americans seek it already for the sake of Lovel and Oldbuck, who dined there at the beginning of the *Antiquary*. But you need not tell me—that is not all; there is some story, unrecorded or not yet complete, which must express the meaning of that inn more fully. So it is with names and faces; so it is with incidents that are idle and inconclusive in themselves, and yet seem like the beginning of some quaint romance, which the all-careless author leaves untold. How many of these romances have we not seen determine at their birth; how many people have met us with a look of meaning in their eye, and sunk

<sup>1</sup>Since traced by many obliging correspondents to the gallery of Charles Kingsley (Stevenson's note).

<sup>2</sup>Sneaking mischief (*Hamlet*, III, ii, 147).

<sup>3</sup>Lady Hamilton (1761–1815), Lord Nelson's mistress.



at once into trivial acquaintances; to how many places have we not drawn near, with express intimations—"here my destiny awaits me"—and we have but dined there and passed on! I have lived both at the Hawes and Burford in a perpetual flutter, on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called me again at morning in one unbroken round of pleasure and suspense, nothing befell me in either worth remark. The man or the hour had not yet come; but some day, I think, a boat shall put off from the Queen's Ferry, fraught with a dear cargo, and some frosty night a horseman, on a tragic errand, rattle with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford.<sup>1</sup>

Now, this is one of the natural appetites with which any lively literature has to count. The desire for knowledge, I had almost added the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident. The dullest of clowns tells, or tries to tell, himself a story, as the feeblest of children uses inventions in his play; and even as the imaginative grown person, joining in the game, at once enriches it with many delightful circumstances, the great creative writer shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream. The right kind of thing should fall out in the right kind of place; the right kind of thing should follow; and not only the characters talk aptly and think naturally, but all the circumstances in a tale answer one to another like notes in music. The threads of a story come from time to time together and make a picture in the web; the characters fall from time to time into some attitude to each other or to nature, which stamps the story home like an illustration. Crusoe recoiling from the foot-print, Achilles shouting over against the Trojans, Ulysses bending the great bow, Christian running with his fingers in his ears,<sup>2</sup> these are each culminating moments in the

legend, and each has been printed on the mind's eye for ever. Other things we may forget; we may forget the words, although they are beautiful; we may forget the author's comment, although perhaps it was ingenious and true; but these epoch-making scenes, which put the last mark of truth upon a story and fill up, at one blow, our capacity for sympathetic pleasure, we so adopt into the very bosom of our mind that neither time nor tide can efface or weaken the impression. This, then, is the plastic part of literature: to embody character, thought, or emotion in some act or attitude that shall be remarkably striking to the mind's eye. This is the highest and hardest thing to do in words; the thing which, once accomplished, equally delights the schoolboy and the sage, and makes, in its own right, the quality of epics. Compared with this, all other purposes in literature, except the purely lyrical or the purely philosophic, are bastard in nature, facile of execution, and feeble in result. It is one thing to write about the inn at Burford, or to describe scenery with the word-painters; it is quite another to seize on the heart of the suggestion and make a country famous with a legend. It is one thing to remark and to dissect, with the most cutting logic, the complications of life, and of the human spirit; it is quite another to give them body and blood in the story of Ajax<sup>3</sup> or of Hamlet. The first is literature, but the second is something besides, for it is likewise art.

English people of the present day are apt, I know not why, to look somewhat down on incident, and reserve their admiration for the clink of teaspoons and the accents of the curate. It is thought clever to write a novel with no story at all, or at least with a very dull one. Reduced even to the lowest terms, a certain interest can be communicated by the art of narrative; a sense of human kinship stirred; and a kind of monotonous fitness, comparable to the words and air of *Sandy's Mull*, preserved among the infinitesimal occurrences recorded. Some people work, in this manner, with even a strong touch. Mr. Trollope's inimitable clergymen naturally arise to the mind in this connection. But even Mr. Trollope does not confine himself to chronicling small beer. Mr. Crawley's

<sup>1</sup>Since the above was written I have tried to launch the boat with my own hands in *Kidnapped*. Some day, perhaps, I may try a rattle at the shutters (Stevenson's note).

<sup>2</sup>In *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Pilgrim's Progress* respectively.

<sup>3</sup>A tragedy of the same name by Sophocles.



collision with the Bishop's wife, Mr. Melnetto dallying in the deserted banquet-room,<sup>1</sup> are typical incidents, epically conceived, fitly embodying a crisis. Or again look at Thackeray. If Rawdon Crawley's blow were not delivered, *Vanity Fair* would cease to be a work of art. That scene is the chief ganglion of the tale; and the discharge of energy from Rawdon's fist is the reward and consolation of the reader. The end of *Esmond* is a yet wider excursion from the author's customary fields; the scene at Castlewood is pure Dumas; the great and wily English borrower has here borrowed from the great, unblushing French thief; as usual, he has borrowed admirably well, and the breaking of the sword rounds off the best of all his books with a manly, martial note. But perhaps nothing can more strongly illustrate the necessity for marking incident than to compare the living fame of *Robinson Crusoe* with the discredit of *Clarissa Harlowe*.<sup>2</sup> *Clarissa* is a book of a far more startling import, worked out, on a great canvas, with inimitable courage and unflagging art. It contains wit, character, passion, plot, conversations full of spirit and insight, letters sparkling with unstrained humanity; and if the death of the heroine be somewhat frigid and artificial, the last days of the hero strike the only note of what we now call Byronism, between the Elizabethans and Byron himself. And yet a little story of a shipwrecked sailor, with not a tenth part of the style nor a thousandth part of the wisdom, exploring none of the arcana of humanity and deprived of the perennial interest of love, goes on from edition to edition, ever young, while *Clarissa* lies upon the shelves unread. A friend of mine, a Welsh blacksmith, was twenty-five years old and could neither read nor write, when he heard a chapter of *Robinson* read aloud in a farm kitchen. Up to that moment he had sat content, huddled in his ignorance, but he left that farm another man. There were day-dreams, it appeared, divine day-dreams, written and printed and bound, and to be bought for money and enjoyed at pleasure. Down he sat that day, painfully learned to read Welsh, and returned to borrow the book. It had been lost, nor could he find another copy but one that was in English. Down he

sat once more, learned English, and at length, and with entire delight, read *Robinson*. It is like the story of a love-chase. If he had heard a letter from *Clarissa*, would he have been fired with the same chivalrous ardor? I wonder. Yet *Clarissa* has every quality that can be shown in prose, one alone excepted—pictorial or picture-making romance. While *Robinson* depends, for the most part and with the overwhelming majority of its readers, on the charm of circumstance.

In the highest achievements of the art of words, the dramatic and the pictorial, the moral and romantic interest, rise and fall together by a common and organic law. Situation is animated with passion, passion clothed upon with situation. Neither exists for itself, but each inheres indissolubly with the other. This is high art; and not only the highest art possible in words, but the highest art of all, since it combines the greatest mass and diversity of the elements of truth and pleasure. Such are epics, and the few prose tales that have the epic weight. But as from a school of works, aping the creative, incident and romance are ruthlessly discarded, so may character and drama be omitted or subordinated to romance. There is one book, for example, more generally loved than Shakespeare, that captivates in childhood, and still delights in age—I mean the *Arabian Nights*—where you shall look in vain for moral or for intellectual interest. No human face or voice greets us among that wooden crowd of kings and genies, sorcerers and beggarmen. Adventure, on the most naked terms, furnishes forth the entertainment and is found enough. Dumas approaches perhaps nearest of any modern to these Arabian authors in the purely material charm of some of his romances. The early part of *Monte Cristo*, down to the finding of the treasure, is a piece of perfect story-telling; the man never breathed who shared these moving incidents without a tremor; and yet Faria is a thing of packthread and Dantès little more than a name. The sequel is one long-drawn error, gloomy, bloody, unnatural, and dull; but as for these early chapters, I do not believe there is another volume extant where you can breathe the same unmingled atmosphere of romance. It is very thin and light, to be sure, as on a high mountain; but it is brisk and clear and sunny in proportion. I saw

<sup>1</sup>In *The Last Chronicle of Barset* and in *The Way We Live Now*, respectively.

<sup>2</sup>By Samuel Richardson, published in 1747-1748.

the other day, with envy, an old, and a very clever lady setting forth on a second or third voyage into *Monte Cristo*. Here are stories which powerfully affect the reader, which can be reperused at any age, and where the characters are no more than puppets. The bony fist of the showman visibly propels them; their springs are an open secret; their faces are of wood, their bellies filled with bran; and yet we thrillingly partake of their adventures. And the point may be illustrated still further. The last interview between Lucy and Richard Feverel<sup>1</sup> is pure drama; more than that, it is the strongest scene, since Shakespeare, in the English tongue. Their first meeting by the river, on the other hand, is pure romance; it has nothing to do with character; it might happen to any other boy and maiden, and be none the less delightful for the change. And yet I think he would be a bold man who should choose between these passages. Thus, in the same book, we may have two scenes, each capital in its order: in the one, human passion, deep calling unto deep, shall utter its genuine voice; in the second, according circumstances, like instruments in tune, shall build up a trivial but desirable incident, such as we love to prefigure for ourselves; and in the end, in spite of the critics, we may hesitate to give the preference to either. The one may ask more genius—I do not say it does; but at least the other dwells as clearly in the memory.

True romantic art, again, makes a romance of all things. It reaches into the highest abstraction of the ideal; it does not refuse the most pedestrian realism. *Robinson Crusoe* is as realistic as it is romantic: both qualities are pushed to an extreme, and neither suffers. Nor does romance depend upon the material importance of the incidents. To deal with strong and deadly elements, banditti, pirates, war and murder, is to conjure with great names, and, in the event of failure, to double the disgrace. The arrival of Haydn and Consuelo at the Canon's villa<sup>2</sup> is a very trifling incident; yet we may read a dozen boisterous stories from beginning to end, and not receive so fresh and stirring an impression of adventure. It was the scene of Crusoe at the wreck, if I remember rightly, that so bewitched my blacksmith. Nor is the fact

surprising. Every single article the castaway recovers from the hulk is "a joy for ever"<sup>3</sup> to the man who reads of them. They are the things that should be found, and the bare enumeration stirs the blood. I found a glimmer of the same interest the other day in a new book, *The Sailor's Sweetheart*, by Mr. Clark Russell. The whole business of the brig *Morning Star* is very rightly felt and spiritedly written; but the clothes, the books and the money satisfy the reader's mind like things to eat. We are dealing here with the old cut-and-dry, legitimate interest of treasure trove. But even treasure trove can be made dull. There are few people who have not groaned under the plethora of goods that fell to the lot of the *Swiss Family Robinson*, that dreary family. They found article after article, creature after creature, from milk kine to pieces of ordnance, a whole consignment; but no informing taste had presided over the selection, there was no smack or relish in the invoice; and these riches left the fancy cold. The box of goods in Verne's *Mysterious Island* is another case in point; there was no gusto and no glamour about that; it might have come from a shop. But the two hundred and seventy-eight Australian sovereigns on board the *Morning Star* fell upon me like a surprise that I had expected; whole vistas of secondary stories, besides the one in hand, radiated forth from that discovery, as they radiate from a striking particular in life; and I was made for the moment as happy as a reader has the right to be.

To come at all at the nature of this quality of romance, we must bear in mind the peculiarity of our attitude to any art. No art produces illusion; in the theater we never forget that we are in the theater; and while we read a story, we sit wavering between two minds, now merely clapping our hands at the merit of the performance, now condescending to take an active part in fancy with the characters. This last is the triumph of romantic story-telling: when the reader consciously plays at being the hero, the scene is a good scene. Now, in character-studies the pleasure that we take is critical; we watch, we approve, we smile at incongruities, we are moved to sudden heats of sympathy with courage, suffering, or virtue. But the char-

<sup>1</sup>In George Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.

<sup>2</sup>In George Sand's *Consuelo*.

<sup>3</sup>Keats, *Endymion*, I, 1.



acters are still themselves, they are not us; the more clearly they are depicted, the more widely do they stand away from us, the more imperiously do they thrust us back into our place as a spectator. I cannot identify myself with Rawdon Crawley or with Eugène de Rastignac,<sup>1</sup> for I have scarce a hope or fear in common with them. It is not character but incident that woos us out of our reserve. Something happens as we desire to have it happen to ourselves; some situation, that we have long dallied with in fancy, is realized in the story with enticing and appropriate details. Then we forget the characters; then we push the hero aside; then we plunge into the tale in our own person and bathe in fresh experience; and then, and then only, do we say we have been reading a romance. It is not only pleasurable things that we imagine in our day-dreams; there are lights in which we are willing to contemplate even the idea of our own death; ways in which it seems as if it would amuse us to be cheated, wounded, or calumniated. It is thus possible to construct a story, even of tragic import, in which every incident, detail, and trick of circumstance shall be welcome to the reader's thoughts. Fiction is to the grown man what play is to the child; it is there that he changes the atmosphere and tenor of his life; and when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him with every turn, when he loves to recall it and dwells upon its recollection with entire delight, fiction is called romance.

Walter Scott is out and away the king of the romantics. *The Lady of the Lake* has no indisputable claim to be a poem beyond the inherent fitness and desirability of the tale. It is just such a story as a man would make up for himself, walking, in the best health and temper, through just such scenes as it is laid in. Hence it is that a charm dwells undefinable among these slovenly verses, as the unseen cuckoo fills the mountains with his note; hence, even after we have flung the book aside, the scenery and adventures remain present to the mind, a new and green possession, not unworthy of that beautiful name, *The Lady of the Lake*, or that direct, romantic opening,—one of the most spirited and poetical in literature,—“The stag at eve

had drunk his fill.” The same strength and the same weaknesses adorn and disfigure the novels. In that ill-written, ragged book, *The Pirate*, the figure of Cleveland—cast up by the sea on the resounding foreland of Dunrossness—moving, with the blood on his hands and the Spanish words on his tongue, among the simple islanders—singing a serenade under the window of his Shetland mistress—is conceived in the very highest manner of romantic invention. The words of his song, “Through groves of palm,” sung in such a scene and by such a lover, clench, as in a nutshell, the emphatic contrast upon which the tale is built. In *Guy Mannering*, again, every incident is delightful to the imagination; and the scene when Harry Bertram lands at Ellangowan is a model instance of romantic method.

“‘I remember the tune well,’ he says, ‘though I cannot guess what should at present so strongly recall it to my memory.’ He took his flageolet from his pocket and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the corresponding associations of a damsel. . . . She immediately took up the song—

“‘Are these the links of Forth, she said;  
Or are they the crooks of Dee,  
Or the bonny woods of Warroch Head  
That I so fain would see?’

“‘By heaven!’ said Bertram, ‘it is the very ballad.’”

On this quotation two remarks fall to be made. First, as an instance of modern feeling for romance, this famous touch of the flageolet and the old song is selected by Miss Braddon<sup>2</sup> for omission. Miss Braddon's idea of a story, like Mrs. Todgers's idea of a wooden leg, were something strange to have expounded. As a matter of personal experience, Meg's appearance to old Mr. Bertram on the road, the ruins of Derncleugh, the scene of the flageolet, and the Dominie's recognition of Harry, are the four strong notes that continue to ring in the mind after the book is laid aside. The second point is still more curious. The reader will observe a mark of excision in the passage as quoted by me. Well, here is how it runs in the original: “A damsel, who, close

<sup>1</sup>In Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and in Balzac's *Père Goriot* and other stories, respectively.

<sup>2</sup>Mary Elizabeth Braddon (Mrs. John Maxwell, 1837-1915), a novelist. Mrs. Todgers appears in Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*.



behind a fine spring about half-way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen." A man who gave in such copy would be discharged from the staff of a daily paper. 5 Scott has forgotten to prepare the reader for the presence of the "damsel"; he has forgotten to mention the spring and its relation to the ruin; and now, face to face with his omission, instead of trying back and starting 10 fair, crams all this matter, tail foremost, into a single shambling sentence. It is not merely bad English, or bad style; it is abominably bad narrative besides.

Certainly the contrast is remarkable; and 15 it is one that throws a strong light upon the subject of this paper. For here we have a man of the finest creative instinct touching with perfect certainty and charm the romantic junctures of his story; and we find him utterly 20 careless, almost, it would seem, incapable, in the technical matter of style, and not only frequently weak, but frequently wrong in points of drama. In character parts, indeed, and particularly in the Scotch, he was delicate, 25 strong, and truthful; but the trite, obliterated features of too many of his heroes have already wearied two generations of readers. At times his characters will speak with something far beyond propriety with a true heroic note; 30 but on the next page they will be wading wearily forward with an ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole of words. The man who could conceive and write the character of Elspeth of the Craighburnfoot,<sup>1</sup> as Scott has 35 conceived and written it, had not only splendid romantic, but splendid tragie gifts. How comes it, then, that he could so often fob us off with languid, inarticulate twaddle?

It seems to me that the explanation is to 40 be found in the very quality of his surprising merits. As his books are play to the reader, so were they play to him. He conjured up the romantic with delight, but he had hardly patience to describe it. He was a great day- 45 dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions, but hardly a great artist; hardly, in the manful sense, an artist at all. He pleased himself, and so he pleases us. Of the pleasures of his art he tasted fully; but of 50 its toils and vigils and distresses never man knew less. A great romantic—an idle child.

<sup>1</sup>See the *Antiquary*.

FATHER DAMIEN<sup>2</sup>

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE REVEREND  
DR. HYDE OF HONOLULU

Sydney, February 25, 1890.

SIR,—It may probably occur to you that we have met, and visited, and conversed; on my side, with interest. You may remember that you have done me several courtesies, for which I was prepared to be grateful. But there are duties which come before gratitude, and offenses which justly divide friends, far more acquaintances. Your letter to the Reverend H. B. Gage is a document, which, in my sight, if you had filled me with bread when I was starving, if you had sat up to nurse my father when he lay a-dying, would yet absolve me from the bonds of gratitude. You know enough, doubtless, of the process of canonization to be aware that, a hundred years after the death of Damien, there will appear a man charged with the painful office of the *devil's advocate*. After that noble brother of mine, and of all frail clay, shall have lain a century at rest, one shall accuse, one defend him. The circumstance is unusual that the devil's advocate should be a volunteer, should be a member of a sect immediately rival, and should make haste to take upon himself his ugly office ere the bones are cold; unusual, and of a taste which I shall leave my readers free to qualify; unusual, and to me inspiring. If I have at all learned the trade of using words to convey truth and to arouse emotion, you have at last furnished me with a subject. For it is in the interest of all mankind and the cause of public decency in every quarter of the world, not only that Damien should be 50 righted, but that you and your letter should

<sup>2</sup>Printed at Sydney, Australia, in 1890, at Stevenson's expense; reprinted in the volume entitled *Lay Morals and Other Papers*. In 1889 Stevenson was at Honolulu and visited the leper settlement on Molokai (one of the Hawaiian Islands), there learning at first hand what he tells about Joseph Damien de Veuster (1840-1889), the Belgian priest who devoted his life to the lepers. Later Stevenson learned of Dr. Hyde's letter through a statement in a newspaper to the effect that the publication of the letter had caused the abandonment of a project to erect a monument to Damien's memory. "I'll not believe it," he said, "unless I see it with my own eyes; for it is too damnable for belief." When, however, he presently reached Sydney, Stevenson did see Dr. Hyde's published letter and the same day wrote his reply. "I knew," he said, "I was writing a libel; I thought he [Hyde] would bring an action; I made sure I should be ruined; I asked leave of my gallant family, and the sense that I was signing away all I possessed kept me up to high-water mark, and made me feel every insult heroic."

be displayed at length, in their true colors, to the public eye.

To do this properly, I must begin by quoting you at large: I shall then proceed to criticize your utterance from several points of view, 5 divine and human, in the course of which I shall attempt to draw again and with more specification the character of the dead saint whom it has pleased you to vilify: so much being done, I shall say farewell to you for ever. 10

*Honolulu, August 2, 1889.*

REV. H. B. GAGE.

Dear Brother,—In answer to your inquiries about Father Damien, I can only reply that we 15 who knew the man are surprised at the extravagant newspaper laudations, as if he was a most saintly philanthropist. The simple truth is, he was a coarse, dirty man, headstrong and bigoted. He was not sent to Molokai, but went there without orders; did not stay at the leper settlement (before he became one himself), but circulated freely over the whole island (less than half the island is devoted to the lepers), and he came often to Honolulu. He had no hand in the reforms and improvements inaugurated, which were the work 25 of our Board of Health, as occasion required and means were provided. He was not a pure man in his relations with women, and the leprosy of which he died should be attributed to his vices and carelessness. Others have done much for the lepers, our own ministers, the government physicians, and so forth, but never with the Catholic idea of meriting eternal life.—Yours, *etc.*, 30

C. M. HYDE.<sup>1</sup>

To deal fitly with a letter so extraordinary, 35 I must draw at the outset on my private knowledge of the signatory and his sect. It may offend others; scarcely you, who have been so busy to collect, so bold to publish, gossip on your rivals. And this is perhaps the 40 moment when I may best explain to you the character of what you are to read: I conceive you as a man quite beyond and below the reticences of civility: with what measure you mete, with that shall it be measured you 45 again; with you, at last, I rejoice to feel the button off the foil and to plunge home. And if in aught that I shall say I should offend others, your colleagues, whom I respect and remember with affection, I can but offer them 50 my regret; I am not free, I am inspired by the consideration of interests far more large; and

such pain as can be inflicted by anything from me must be indeed trifling when compared with the pain with which they read your letter. It is not the hangman, but the criminal, that brings dishonor on the house.

You belong, sir, to a sect—I believe my sect, and that in which my ancestors labored—which has enjoyed, and partly failed to utilize, an exceptional advantage in the islands 10 of Hawaii. The first missionaries came; they found the land already self-purged of its old and bloody faith; they were embraced, almost on their arrival, with enthusiasm; what troubles they supported came far more from 15 whites than from Hawaiians; and to these last they stood (in a rough figure) in the shoes of God. This is not the place to enter into the degree or causes of their failure, such as it is. One element alone is pertinent, and must 20 here be plainly dealt with. In the course of their evangelical calling, they—or too many of them—grew rich. It may be news to you that the houses of missionaries are a cause of mocking on the streets of Honolulu. It will 25 at least be news to you, that when I returned your civil visit, the driver of my cab commented on the size, the taste, and the comfort of your home. It would have been news certainly to myself, had any one told me that 30 afternoon that I should live to drag such matter into print. But you see, sir, how you degrade better men to your own level; and it is needful that those who are to judge betwixt you and me, betwixt Damien and the devil's 35 advocate, should understand your letter to have been penned in a house which could raise, and that very justly, the envy and the comments of the passers-by. I think (to employ a phrase of yours which I admire) it "should 40 be attributed" to you that you have never visited the scene of Damien's life and death. If you had, and had recalled it, and looked about your pleasant rooms, even your pen perhaps would have been stayed.

Your sect (and remember, as far as any sect avows me, it is mine) has not done ill in a worldly sense in the Hawaiian Kingdom. When calamity befell their innocent parishioners, when leprosy descended and took root 45 in the Eight Islands, a *quid pro quo*<sup>2</sup> was to be looked for. To that prosperous mission, and to you, as one of its adornments, God had

<sup>1</sup>From the Sydney *Presbyterian*, October 26, 1889 (Stevenson's note).

<sup>2</sup>A fair return.

sent at last an opportunity. I know I am touching here upon a nerve acutely sensitive. I know that others of your colleagues look back on the inertia of your Church, and the intrusive and decisive heroism of Damien, with something almost to be called remorse. I am sure it is so with yourself; I am persuaded your letter was inspired by a certain envy, not essentially ignoble, and the one human trait to be espied in that performance. You were thinking of the lost chance, the past day; of that which should have been conceived and was not; of the service due and not rendered. *Time was*, said the voice in your ear, in your pleasant room, as you sat raging and writing; and if the words written were base beyond parallel, the rage, I am happy to repeat—it is the only compliment I shall pay you—the rage was almost virtuous. But, sir, when we have failed, and another has succeeded; when we have stood by, and another has stepped in; when we sit and grow bulky in our charming mansions, and a plain, uncouth peasant steps into the battle, under the eyes of God, and succors the afflicted, and consoles the dying, and is himself afflicted in his turn, and dies upon the field of honor—the battle cannot be retrieved as your unhappy irritation has suggested. It is a lost battle, and lost for ever. One thing remained to you in your defeat—some rags of common honor; and these you have made haste to cast away.

Common honor; not the honor of having done anything right, but the honor of not having done aught conspicuously foul; the honor of the inert: that was what remained to you. We are not all expected to be Damiens; a man may conceive his duty more narrowly, he may love his comforts better; and none will cast a stone at him for that. But will a gentleman of your reverend profession allow me an example from the fields of gallantry? When two gentlemen compete for the favor of a lady, and the one succeeds and the other is rejected, and (as will sometimes happen) matter damaging to the successful rival's credit reaches the ear of the defeated, it is held by plain men of no pretensions that his mouth is, in the circumstance, almost necessarily closed. Your Church and Damien's were in Hawaii upon a rivalry to do well: to help, to edify, to set divine examples. You having (in one huge instance) failed, and Damien succeeded, I marvel it should not

have occurred to you that you were doomed to silence; that when you had been outstripped in that high rivalry, and sat inglorious in the midst of your well-being, in your pleasant room—and Damien, crowned with glories and horrors, toiled and rotted in that pigsty of his under the cliffs of Kalawao—you, the elect who would not, were the last man on earth to collect and propagate gossip on the volunteer who would and did.

I think I see you—for I try to see you in the flesh as I write these sentences—I think I see you leap at the word pigsty, a hyperbolic expression at the best. "He had no hand in the reforms," he was "a coarse, dirty man"; these were your own words; and you may think it possible that I am come to support you with fresh evidence. In a sense, it is even so. Damien has been too much depicted with a conventional halo and conventional features; so drawn by men who perhaps had not the eye to remark or the pen to express the individual; or who perhaps were only blinded and silenced by generous admiration, such as I partly envy for myself—such as you, if your soul were enlightened, would envy on your bended knees. It is the least defect of such a method of portraiture that it makes the path easy for the devil's advocate, and leaves for the misuse of the slanderer a considerable field of truth. For the truth that is suppressed by friends is the readiest weapon of the enemy. The world, in your despite, may perhaps owe you something, if your letter be the means of substituting once for all a credible likeness for a wax abstraction. For, if that world at all remember you, on the day when Damien of Molokai shall be named Saint, it will be in virtue of one work: your letter to the Reverend H. B. Gage.

You may ask on what authority I speak. It was my inclement destiny to become acquainted, not with Damien, but with Dr. Hyde. When I visited the lazaretto Damien was already in his resting grave. But such information as I have, I gathered on the spot in conversation with those who knew him well and long: some indeed who revered his memory; but others who had sparred and wrangled with him, who beheld him with no halo, who perhaps regarded him with small respect, and through whose unprepared and scarcely partial communications the plain, human features of the man shone on me con-



wincingly. These gave me what knowledge I possess; and I learned it in that scene where it could be most completely and sensitively understood—Kalawao, which you have never visited, about which you have never so much as endeavored to inform yourself: for, brief as your letter is, you have found the means to stumble into that confession. “*Less than one-half of the island*,” you say, “is devoted to the lepers.” Molokai—“*Molokai ahina*,” 10 the “gray,” lofty, and most desolate island—along all its northern side plunges a front of precipice into a sea of unusual profundity. This range of cliff is, from east to west, the true end and frontier of the island. Only in 15 one spot there projects into the ocean a certain triangular and rugged down, grassy, stony, windy, and rising in the midst into a hill with a dead crater: the whole bearing to the cliff that overhangs it somewhat the same relation 20 as a bracket to a wall. With this hint you will now be able to pick out the leper station on a map; you will be able to judge how much of Molokai is thus cut off between the surf and precipice, whether less than a half, or less than 25 a quarter, or a fifth, or a tenth—or say, a twentieth; and the next time you burst into print you will be in a position to share with us the issue of your calculations.

I imagine you to be one of those persons 30 who talk with cheerfulness of that place which oxen and wainropes could not drag you to behold. You, who do not even know its situation on the map, probably denounce sensational descriptions, stretching your limbs 35 the while in your pleasant parlor on Beretania Street. When I was pulled ashore there one early morning, there sat with me in the boat two sisters, bidding farewell (in humble imitation of Damien) to the lights 40 and joys of human life. One of these wept silently; I could not withhold myself from joining her. Had you been there, it is my belief that nature would have triumphed even in you; and as the boat drew but a little nearer, 45 and you beheld the stairs crowded with abominable deformations of our common manhood, and saw yourself landing in the midst of such a population as only now and then surrounds us in the horror of a nightmare 50 —what a haggard eye you would have rolled over your reluctant shoulder towards the house on Beretania Street! Had you gone on; had you found every fourth face a blot

upon the landscape; had you visited the hospital and seen the butt-ends of human beings lying there almost unrecognizable, but still breathing, still thinking, still remembering; you would have understood that life in the lazaretto is an ordeal from which the nerves of a man’s spirit shrink, even as his eye quails under the brightness of the sun; you would have felt it was (even to-day) a pitiful 10 place to visit and a hell to dwell in. It is not the fear of possible infection. That seems a little thing when compared with the pain, the pity, and the disgust of the visitor’s surroundings, and the atmosphere of affliction, disease, and physical disgrace in which he breathes. I do not think I am a man 15 more than usually timid; but I never recall the days and nights I spent upon that island promontory (eight days and seven nights), without heartfelt thankfulness that I am somewhere else. I find in my diary that I speak of my stay as a “grinding experience”: I have once jotted in the margin, “*Harrowing* 20 is the word”; and when the *Mokolii* bore me at last towards the outer world, I kept repeating to myself, with a new conception of their pregnancy, those simple words of the song—

“’Tis the most distressful country that ever yet was seen.”

And observe: that which I saw and suffered from was a settlement purged, bettered, beautified; the new village built, the hospital and the Bishop-Home excellently arranged; the 35 sisters, the doctor, and the missionaries, all indefatigable in their noble tasks. It was a different place when Damien came there, and made his great renunciation, and slept that first night under a tree amidst his rotting 40 brethren: alone with pestilence; and looking forward (with what courage, with what pitiful sinkings of dread, God only knows) to a lifetime of dressing sores and stumps.

You will say, perhaps, I am too sensitive, 45 that sights as painful abound in cancer hospitals and are confronted daily by doctors and nurses. I have long learned to admire and envy the doctors and the nurses. But there is no cancer hospital so large and 50 populous as Kalawao and Kalaupapa; and in such a matter every fresh case, like every inch of length in the pipe of an organ, deepens the note of the impression; for what daunts the onlooker is that monstrous sum of human suf-

fering by which he stands surrounded. Lastly, no doctor or nurse is called upon to enter once for all the doors of that gehenna; they do not say farewell, they need not abandon hope, on its sad threshold; they but go for a time to their high calling, and can look forward as they go to relief, to recreation, and to rest. But Damien shut to with his own hand the doors of his own sepulcher.

I shall now extract three passages from my diary at Kalawao:

A. Damien is dead and already somewhat ungratefully remembered in the field of his labors and sufferings. "He was a good man, but very officious," says one. Another tells me he had fallen (as other priests so easily do) into something of the ways and habits of thought of a Kanaka;<sup>1</sup> but he had the wit to recognize the fact, and the good sense to laugh at [over] it. A plain man it seems he was; I cannot find he was a popular.

B. After Ragsdale's death [Ragsdale was a famous Luna, or overseer, of the unruly settlement] there followed a brief term of office by Father Damien which served only to publish the weakness of that noble man. He was rough in his ways, and he had no control. Authority was relaxed; Damien's life was threatened, and he was soon eager to resign.

C. Of Damien I begin to have an idea. He seems to have been a man of the peasant class, certainly of the peasant type: shrewd; ignorant and bigoted, yet with an open mind, and capable of receiving and digesting a reproof if it were bluntly administered; superbly generous in the least thing as well as in the greatest, and as ready to give his last shirt (although not without human grumbling) as he had been to sacrifice his life; essentially indiscreet and officious, which made him a troublesome colleague; domineering in all his ways, which made him incurably unpopular with the Kanakas, but yet destitute of real authority, so that his boys laughed at him and he must carry out his wishes by the means of bribes. He learned to have a mania for doctoring; and set up the Kanakas against the remedies of his regular rivals: perhaps (if anything matter at all in the treatment of such a disease) the worst thing that he did, and certainly the easiest. The best and worst of the man appear very plainly in his dealings with Mr. Chapman's money; he had originally laid it out [intended to lay it out] entirely for the benefit of Catholics, and even so not wisely, but after a long, plain talk, he admitted his error fully and revised the list. The sad state of the boys' home is in part the result of his lack of control; in part, of his own slovenly ways and false

ideas of hygiene. Brother officials used to call it "Damien's Chinatown." "Well," they would say, "your Chinatown keeps growing." And he would laugh with perfect good-nature, and adhere to his errors with perfect obstinacy. So much I have gathered of truth about this plain, noble human brother and father of ours; his imperfections are the traits of his face, by which we know him for our fellow; his martyrdom and his example nothing can lessen or annul; and only a person here on the spot can properly appreciate their greatness.

I have set down these private passages, as you perceive, without correction; thanks to you, the public has them in their bluntness. They are almost a list of the man's faults, for it is rather these that I was seeking: with his virtues, with the heroic profile of his life, I and the world were already sufficiently acquainted. I was besides a little suspicious of Catholic testimony; in no ill sense, but merely because Damien's admirers and disciples were the least likely to be critical. I know you will be more suspicious still; and the facts set down above were one and all collected from the lips of Protestants who had opposed the father in his life. Yet I am strangely deceived, or they build up the image of a man, with all his weaknesses, essentially heroic, and alive with rugged honesty, generosity, and mirth.

Take it for what it is, rough private jottings of the worst sides of Damien's character, collected from the lips of those who had labored with and (in your own phrase) "knew the man";—though I question whether Damien would have said that he knew you. Take it, and observe with wonder how well you were served by your gossips, how ill by your intelligence and sympathy; in how many points of fact we are at one, and how widely our appreciations vary. There is something wrong here; either with you or me. It is possible, for instance, that you, who seem to have so many ears in Kalawao, had heard of the affair of Mr. Chapman's money, and were singly struck by Damien's intended wrong-doing. I was struck with that also, and set it fairly down; but I was struck much more by the fact that he had the honesty of mind to be convinced. I may here tell you that it was a long business; that one of his colleagues sat with him late into the night, multiplying arguments and accusations; that the father listened as usual with "perfect

<sup>1</sup>The name given to the aboriginal inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands.

good-nature and perfect obstinacy"; but at the last when he was persuaded,—“Yes,” said he, “I am very much obliged to you; you have done me a service; it would have been a theft.” There are many (not Catholics merely) who require their heroes and saints to be infallible; to these the story will be painful; not to the true lovers, patrons, and servants of mankind.

And I take it, this is a type of our division; that you are one of those who have an eye for faults and failures; that you take a pleasure to find and publish them; and that, having found them, you make haste to forget the overruling virtues and the real success which had alone introduced them to your knowledge. It is a dangerous frame of mind. That you may understand how dangerous, and into what a situation it has already brought you, we will (if you please) go hand-in-hand through the different phrases of your letter, and candidly examine each from the point of view of its truth, its appositeness, and its charity.

Damien was *coarse*.

It is very possible. You make us sorry for the lepers who had only a coarse old peasant for their friend and father. But you, who were so refined, why were you not there, to cheer them with the lights of culture? Or may I remind you that we have some reason to doubt if John the Baptist were genteel; and in the case of Peter, on whose career you doubtless dwell approvingly in the pulpit, no doubt at all he was a “coarse, headstrong” fisherman! Yet even in our Protestant Bibles Peter is called Saint.

Damien was *dirty*.

He was. Think of the poor lepers annoyed with this dirty comrade! But the clean Dr. Hyde was at his food in a fine house.

Damien was *headstrong*.

I believe you are right again; and I thank God for his strong head and heart.

Damien was *bigoted*.

I am not fond of bigots myself, because they are not fond of me. But what is meant by bigotry, that we should regard it as a blemish in a priest? Damien believed his own religion with the simplicity of a peasant or a child; as I would I could suppose that you do. For

this, I wonder at him some way off; and had that been his only character, should have avoided him in life. But the point of interest in Damien, which has caused him to be so much talked about and made him at last the subject of your pen and mine, was that, in him, his bigotry, his intense and narrow faith, wrought potentially for good, and strengthened him to be one of the world's heroes and exemplars.

*Damien was not sent to Molokai, but went there without orders.*

Is this a misreading? or do you really mean the words for blame? I have heard Christ, in the pulpits of our Church, held up for imitation on the ground that His sacrifice was voluntary. Does Dr. Hyde think otherwise?

*Damien did not stay at the settlement, etc.*

It is true he was allowed many indulgences. Am I to understand that you blame the father for profiting by these, or the officers for granting them? In either case, it is a mighty Spartan standard to issue from the house on Beretania Street; and I am convinced you will find yourself with few supporters.

*Damien had no hand in the reforms, etc.*

I think even you will admit that I have already been frank in my description of the man I am defending; but before I take you up upon this head, I will be franker still, and tell you that perhaps nowhere in the world can a man taste a more pleasurable sense of contrast than when he passes from Damien's “Chinatown” at Kalawao to the beautiful Bishop-Home at Kalaupapa. At this point, in my desire to make all fair for you, I will break my rule and adduce Catholic testimony. Here is a passage from my diary about my visit to the Chinatown, from which you will see how it is (even now) regarded by its own officials: “We went round all the dormitories, refectories, etc.—dark and dingy enough, with a superficial cleanliness, which he” [Mr. Dutton, the lay brother] “did not seek to defend. ‘It is almost decent,’ said he; ‘the sisters will make that all right when we get them here.’” And yet I gathered it was already better since Damien was dead, and far better than when he was there alone and had his own (not always excellent) way. I have now come far



enough to meet you on a common ground of fact; and I tell you that, to a mind not prejudiced by jealousy, all the reforms of the lazaretto, and even those which he most vigorously opposed, are properly the work of 5 Damien. They are the evidence of his success; they are what his heroism provoked from the reluctant and the careless. Many were before him in the field; Mr. Meyer, for instance, of whose faithful work we hear too little: there have been many since; and some 10 had more worldly wisdom, though none had more devotion, than our saint. Before his day, even you will confess, they had effected little. It was his part, by one striking act 15 of martyrdom, to direct all men's eyes on that distressful country. At a blow, and with the price of his life, he made the place illustrious and public. And that, if you will consider largely, was the one reform needful; pregnant 20 of all that should succeed. It brought money; it brought (best individual addition of them all) the sisters; it brought supervision, for public opinion and public interest landed with the man at Kalawao. If ever any man 25 brought reforms, and died to bring them, it was he. There is not a clean cup or towel in the Bishop-Home, but dirty Damien washed it.

Damien was not a pure man in his relations 30 with women, etc.

How do you know that? Is this the nature of the conversation in that house on Beretania Street which the cabman envied, driving past?—racy details of the misconduct of the poor 35 peasant priest, toiling under the cliffs of Molokai?

Many have visited the station before me; they seem not to have heard the rumor. When I was there I heard many shocking tales, 40 for my informants were men speaking with the plainness of the laity; and I heard plenty of complaints of Damien. Why was this never mentioned? and how came it to you in the retirement of your clerical parlor?

But I must not even seem to deceive you. This scandal, when I read it in your letter, was not new to me. I had heard it once before; and I must tell you how. There came to Samoa a man from Honolulu; he, in a public- 50 house on the beach, volunteered the statement that Damien had "contracted the disease from having connection with the female lepers"; and I find a joy in telling you how the report

was welcomed in a public-house. A man sprang to his feet; I am not at liberty to give his name, but from what I heard I doubt if you would care to have him to dinner in 5 Beretania Street. "You miserable little——" (here is a word I dare not print, it would so shock your ears). "You miserable little——," he cried, "if the story were a thousand times true, can't you see you are a 10 million times a lower——for daring to repeat it?" I wish it could be told of you that when the report reached you in your house, perhaps after family worship, you had found in your soul enough holy anger to receive it with the same expressions: ay, even with that one 15 which I dare not print; it would not need to have been blotted away, like Uncle Toby's oath,<sup>1</sup> by the tears of the recording angel; it would have been counted to you for your brightest righteousness. But you have deliberately chosen the part of the man from Honolulu, and you have played it with im- 20 provements of your own. The man from Honolulu—miserable, leering creature—communicated the tale to a rude knot of beach-combing drinkers in a public-house, where (I will so far agree with your temperance opin- 25 ions) man is not always at his noblest; and the man from Honolulu had himself been drinking—drinking, we may charitably fancy, to excess. It was to your "Dear Brother, the Reverend H. B. Gage," that you chose to communicate the sickening story; and the blue ribbon which adorns your portly bosom 30 forbids me to allow you the extenuating plea that you were drunk when it was done. Your "dear brother"—a brother indeed—made haste to deliver up your letter (as a means of grace, perhaps) to the religious 35 papers; where, after many months, I found and read and wondered at it; and whence I have now reproduced it for the wonder of others. And you and your dear brother have, by this cycle of operations, built up a contrast very edifying to examine in detail. 40 The man whom you would not care to have to dinner, on the one side; on the other, the Reverend Dr. Hyde and the Reverend H. B. Gage: the Apia bar-room, the Honolulu manse. 45 But I fear you scarce appreciate how you appear to your fellow-men; and to bring it home to you, I will suppose your story to be

<sup>1</sup>In Lawrence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

true. I will suppose—and God forgive me for supposing it—that Damien faltered and stumbled in his narrow path of duty; I will suppose that, in the horror of his isolation, perhaps in the fever of incipient disease, he, 5 who was doing so much more than he had sworn, failed in the letter of his priestly oath—he, who was so much a better man than either you or me, who did what we have never dreamed of daring—he too tasted of our 10 common frailty. “O, Iago, the pity of it!”<sup>1</sup> The least tender should be moved to tears; the most incredulous to prayer. And all that you could do was to pen your letter to the Reverend H. B. Gage!

Is it growing at all clear to you what a picture you have drawn of your own heart? I will try yet once again to make it clearer. You had a father: suppose this tale were about him, and some informant brought it to you, proof in hand: I am not making too high an estimate of your emotional nature when I suppose you would regret the circumstance? that you would feel the tale of frailty the more keenly since it shamed the author of your 15 days? and that the last thing you would do would be to publish it in the religious press? Well, the man who tried to do what Damien did, is my father, and the father of the man 15 in the Apia bar, and the father of all who love goodness; and he was your father too, if God had given you grace to see it.

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<sup>1</sup>*Othello*, IV, i, 207.

## ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837-1909)

Swinburne was born in London on 5 April, 1837, the eldest child of Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne and the Lady Jane Henrietta, daughter of the third Earl of Ashburnham. It is said that Swinburne's features and something of his mental character were inherited from his mother, who was a woman of unusual accomplishment and widely read in foreign literature. Swinburne's paternal grandfather, Sir John Edward Swinburne, sixth baronet of Capheaton, Northumberland, who had been born and brought up in France, and who in habits, dress, and modes of thought resembled a French nobleman of the *ancien régime*, exercised a strong influence over his grandson's youth. The boy was brought up in the Isle of Wight, and from his earliest years was trained by his grandfather and mother in French and Italian. In 1849 he was sent to Eton, where he proceeded to read enormously, devouring everything he could lay his hands on, particularly in the fields of lyric poetry and the Elizabethan drama. By the time he was fourteen many of his life-long partialities and prejudices were fully formed; at that time he was immersed in Shelley, Keats, Landor, the *Orlando Furioso*, and the tragedies of Corneille, and already he was indifferent to Horace, disliked Racine, and hated Euripides. In 1853 Swinburne left Eton under something of a cloud, because of his rebellious attitude towards one or more of his teachers. There was then some talk in his family of preparing him for the army, but the project was abandoned because of his shortness and slightness, to his own life-long regret. In January, 1856, he entered Balliol College, Oxford. After his first year at Oxford his high-church proclivities melted away, and he became, what he remained, a nihilist in religion and a republican. He kept his terms regularly at Oxford until 1858, after which he was there less regularly, and he finally left the University without a degree in the fall of 1859. He was a brilliant though self-willed student, and his attainments in Greek were remarkable, but Benjamin Jowett, who long remained his warm friend, advised his leaving Oxford because of irregular ways of life into which he was drifting.

Late in 1860 Swinburne's first book was published, *The Queen Mother and Rosamond*, containing two plays. It passed at the time entirely unnoticed both by reviewers and by the public, and it is said that not a single copy was sold until some years afterwards. In the years immediately following he began to indulge in those "excitements of London life" which were long to arouse

the fears of his friends, when he could not be kept away from them, and which played havoc with his health. Early in 1864 he went abroad for the longest journey of his life, traveling through France to Italy, where he saw his idol, Landor, then in his ninetieth year. In April, 1865, Swinburne's second book, *Atalanta in Calydon*, was published. The magnificent verse of this play did not go unappreciated, and the book became, indeed, the literary sensation of the year. At the end of 1865 a fourth play was published, *Chastelard*, which also was successful, though it was regarded by a section of the public as an immoral performance. Suspicion concerning Swinburne's morals was electrified into certainty by the publication in the following year of *Poems and Ballads*. So violent and universal were the attacks on this book that after a few months it was withdrawn from sale by its publisher. The pressure of friends rather than any change of mind or heart kept Swinburne thereafter from offending British sensibilities in the same way. The pressure of friends, however, did not prevent Swinburne from continuing disastrously to indulge in the "excitements of London life," until finally in 1879 Theodore Watts-Dunton removed the poet to his own house, The Pines, Putney, where he slowly recovered his health and where he lived in the closest retirement until his death from pneumonia on 10 April, 1909. In the years after 1866 Swinburne continued to write voluminously, both plays and lyric poems, and he also published from time to time a number of critical studies written in dithyrambic prose. Among his volumes are: *Songs before Sunrise* (1871), *Bothwell, a Tragedy* (1874), *Songs of Two Nations* (1875), *Erechtheus* (1876), *Poems and Ballads, Second Series* (1878), *Mary Stuart, a Tragedy* (1881), *Tristram of Lyonesse, and Other Poems* (1882), *A Century of Roundels* (1883), *Poems and Ballads, Third Series* (1889), *Astrophel and Other Poems* (1894), *The Tale of Balen* (1896), and *A Channel Passage, and Other Poems* (1904). His critical studies include: *William Blake* (1868), *George Chapman* (1875), *Essays and Studies* (1875), *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880), *A Study of Victor Hugo* (1886), *A Study of Ben Jonson* (1889), and *The Age of Shakespeare* (1908).

Swinburne in an essay on *Wordsworth and Byron* wrote, "It would be an absolute waste of time, for one who assumes it as indisputable, to enter into controversy with one who holds it as disputable, that the two primary and essential qualities



of poetry are imagination and harmony; that where these qualities are wanting there can be no poetry, properly so called; and that where these qualities are perceptible in the highest degree, there, even though they should be unaccompanied and unsupported by any other great quality whatever—even though the ethical or critical faculty should be conspicuous by its absence—there,

and only there, is the best and highest poetry." This definition of poetry is at least useful to indicate the qualities for which Swinburne's own verse is pre-eminent. Whether or not Swinburne had the highest poetical imagination may be a question, but there can be no doubt about his lyrical fervor and his unparalleled mastery of the rhythmical possibilities of the language.

## CHORUSES FROM *ATA-LANTA IN CALYDON*<sup>1</sup>

### I

WHEN the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,

The mother of months<sup>2</sup> in meadow or plain  
Fills the shadows and windy places

With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;  
And the brown bright nightingale amorous  
Is half assuaged for Itylus,<sup>3</sup>

For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,  
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of  
quivers,

Maiden most perfect, lady of light, 10  
With a noise of winds and many rivers,

With a clamor of waters, and with might;  
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,  
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;  
For the faint east quickens, the wan west  
shivers, 15

Round the feet of the day and the feet of  
the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to  
her,

Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?  
O that man's heart were as fire and could  
spring to her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams that  
spring! 20

For the stars and the winds are unto her  
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;  
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,  
And the southwest-wind and the west-  
wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over, 25  
And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,  
The light that loses, the night that wins;

<sup>1</sup>The following poems are reprinted from the collected edition of Swinburne's poems, in six volumes, with the permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

<sup>2</sup>The moon, Artemis.

<sup>3</sup>See note to Arnold's *Philomela* above. Itylus was the son of Procne, the nephew of Philomela (the nightingale).

And time remembered is grief forgotten,  
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten, 30  
And in green underwood and cover  
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,  
Ripe grasses trammel a traveling foot, 34  
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes  
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;  
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,  
And the oat is heard above the lyre,  
And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes  
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root. 40

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,  
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,  
Follows with dancing and fills with delight  
The Mænad and the Bassarid;<sup>4</sup>  
And soft as lips that laugh and hide 45  
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,  
And screen from seeing and leave in sight  
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair  
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes; 50  
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare  
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;  
The wild vine slips with the weight of its  
leaves,  
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves  
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare 55  
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

### II

Before the beginning of years  
There came to the making of man  
Time, with a gift of tears;  
Grief, with a glass that ran;  
Pleasure, with pain for leaven; 5  
Summer, with flowers that fell;  
Remembrance fallen from heaven,  
And madness risen from hell;  
Strength without hands to smite;  
Love that endures for a breath: 10  
Night, the shadow of light,  
And life, the shadow of death.

<sup>4</sup>Bacchantes, worshippers of Bacchus.

And the high gods took in hand  
 Fire, and the falling of tears,  
 And a measure of sliding sand 15  
 From under the feet of the years;  
 And froth and drift of the sea;  
 And dust of the laboring earth;  
 And bodies of things to be  
 In the houses of death and of birth; 20  
 And wrought with weeping and laughter,  
 And fashioned with loathing and love,  
 With life before and after  
 And death beneath and above,  
 For a day and a night and a morrow, 25  
 That his strength might endure for a span  
 With travail and heavy sorrow,  
 The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south  
 They gathered as unto strife; 30  
 They breathed upon his mouth,  
 They filled his body with life;  
 Eyesight and speech they wrought  
 For the veils of the soul therein,  
 A time for labor and thought, 35  
 A time to serve and to sin;  
 They gave him light in his ways,  
 And love, and a space for delight,  
 And beauty and length of days,  
 And night, and sleep in the night. 40  
 His speech is a burning fire;  
 With his lips he travaileth;  
 In his heart is a blind desire,  
 In his eyes foreknowledge of death;  
 He weaves, and is clothed with derision; 45  
 Sows, and he shall not reap;  
 His life is a watch or a vision  
 Between a sleep and a sleep.

## III

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair;  
 thou art goodly, O Love;  
 Thy wings make light in the air as the wings  
 of a dove.  
 Thy feet are as winds that divide the stream  
 of the sea;  
 Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the gar-  
 ment of thee.  
 Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a  
 flame of fire; 5  
 Before thee the laughter, behind thee the  
 tears of desire;  
 And twain go forth beside thee, a man with  
 a maid;  
 Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom delight  
 makes afraid;  
 As the breath in the buds that stir is her  
 bridal breath:  
 But Fate is the name of her; and his name is  
 Death. 10

For an evil blossom was born  
 Of sea-foam and the frothing of blood,  
 Blood-red and bitter of fruit,  
 And the seed of it laughter and tears, .  
 And the leaves of it madness and scorn; 15  
 A bitter flower from the bud,  
 Sprung of the sea without root,  
 Sprung without graft from the years.

The weft of the world was untorn  
 That is woven of the day on the night, 20  
 The hair of the hours was not white  
 Nor the raiment of time overworn,  
 When a wonder, a world's delight,  
 A perilous goddess was born;  
 And the waves of the sea as she came 25  
 Clove, and the foam at her feet,  
 Fawning, rejoiced to bring forth  
 A fleshly blossom, a flame  
 Filling the heavens with heat  
 To the cold white ends of the north. 30

And in air the clamorous birds,  
 And men upon earth that hear  
 Sweet articulate words  
 Sweetly divided apart,  
 And in shallow and channel and mere 35  
 The rapid and footless herds,  
 Rejoiced, being foolish of heart.

For all they said upon earth,  
 She is fair, she is white like a dove,  
 And the life of the world in her breath 40  
 Breathes, and is born at her birth;  
 For they knew thee for mother of love,  
 And knew thee not mother of death.

What hadst thou to do being born,  
 Mother, when winds were at ease, 45  
 As a flower of the springtime of corn,  
 A flower of the foam of the seas?  
 For bitter thou wast from thy birth,  
 Aphrodite, a mother of strife;  
 For before thee some rest was on earth, 50  
 A little respite from tears,  
 A little pleasure of life;  
 For life was not then as thou art,  
 But as one that waxeth in years  
 Sweet-spoken, a fruitful wife; 55  
 Earth had no thorn, and desire  
 No sting, neither death any dart;  
 What hadst thou to do among these,  
 Thou, clothed with a burning fire,  
 Thou, girt with sorrow of heart, 60  
 Thou, sprung of the seed of the seas  
 As an ear from a seed of corn,  
 As a brand plucked forth of a pyre,  
 As a ray shed forth of the morn,  
 For division of soul and disease, 65  
 For a dart and a sting and a thorn?  
 What ailed thee then to be born?

Was there not evil enough,  
 Mother, and anguish on earth  
 Born with a man at his birth, 70  
 Wastes underfoot, and above  
 Storm out of heaven, and dearth  
 Shaken down from the shining thereof,  
 Wrecks from afar overseas  
 And peril of shallow and firth, 75  
 And tears that spring and increase  
 In the barren places of mirth,  
 That thou, having wings as a dove,  
 Being girt with desire for a girth, 80  
 That thou must come after these,  
 That thou must lay on him love?

Thou shouldst not so have been born:  
 But death should have risen with thee,  
 Mother, and visible fear,  
 Grief, and the wringing of hands, 85  
 And noise of many that mourn;  
 The smitten bosom, the knee  
 Bowed, and in each man's ear  
 A cry as of perishing lands,  
 A moan as of people in prison, 90  
 A tumult of infinite griefs;  
 And thunder of storm on the sands,  
 And wailing of waves on the shore;  
 And under thee newly arisen  
 Loud shoals and shipwrecking reefs, 95  
 Fierce air and violent light;  
 Sail rent and sundering oar,  
 Darkness, and noises of night;  
 Clashing of streams in the sea,  
 Wave against wave as a sword, 100  
 Clamor of currents, and foam;  
 Rains making ruin on earth,  
 Winds that wax ravenous and roam  
 As wolves in a wolfish horde;  
 Fruits growing faint in the tree, 105  
 And blind things dead in their birth;  
 Famine, and blighting of corn,  
 When thy time was come to be born.

All these we know of; but thee  
 Who shall discern or declare? 110  
 In the uttermost ends of the sea  
 The light of thine eyelids and hair,  
 The light of thy bosom as fire  
 Between the wheel of the sun  
 And the flying flames of the air? 115  
 Wilt thou turn thee not yet nor have pity,  
 But abide with despair and desire  
 And the crying of armies undone,  
 Lamentation of one with another  
 And breaking of city by city; 120  
 The dividing of friend against friend,  
 The severing of brother and brother;  
 Wilt thou utterly bring to an end?  
 Have mercy, mother!

For against all men from of old 125  
 Thou hast set thine hand as a curse,  
 And cast out gods from their places.  
 These things are spoken of thee.  
 Strong kings and goodly with gold  
 Thou has found out arrows to pierce, 130  
 And made their kingdoms and races  
 As dust and surf of the sea.  
 All these, overburdened with woes  
 And with length of their days waxen weak,  
 Thou slewest; and sentest moreover 135  
 Upon Tyro<sup>1</sup> an evil thing,  
 Rent hair and a fetter and blows  
 Making bloody the flower of the cheek,  
 Though she lay by a god as a lover, 139  
 Though fair, and the seed of a king.  
 For of old, being full of thy fire,  
 She endured not longer to wear  
 On her bosom a saffron vest,  
 On her shoulder an ashwood quiver;  
 Being mixed and made one through desire 145  
 With Enipeus, and all her hair  
 Made moist with his mouth, and her  
 breast  
 Filled full of the foam of the river.

ITYLUS<sup>2</sup>

SWALLOW, my sister, O sister swallow,  
 How can thine heart be full of the spring?  
 A thousand summers are over and dead.  
 What hast thou found in the spring to follow?  
 What hast thou found in thine heart to sing?  
 What wilt thou do when the summer is  
 shed? 6

O swallow sister, O fair swift swallow,  
 Why wilt thou fly after spring to the south,  
 The soft south whither thine heart is set?  
 Shall not the grief of the old time follow? 10  
 Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy  
 mouth?  
 Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow,  
 Thy way is long to the sun and the south;  
 But I, fulfilled of my heart's desire, 15  
 Shedding my song upon height, upon hollow,  
 From tawny body and sweet small mouth  
 Feed the heart of the night with fire.

<sup>1</sup>The wife of Cretheus. She was loved by Enipeus, Macedonian river-god.

<sup>2</sup>This and the four following poems are from *Poems and Ballads*, First Series. Concerning Itylus see notes above to the first chorus from *Atalanta in Calydon* and to Arnold's *Philomela*. It is Philomela, the nightingale, not Procne, her "sister swallow" and the mother of Itylus, who here laments the slain boy.



I the nightingale all spring through, O swallow, sister, O changing swallow, 20 All spring through till the spring be done, Clothed with the light of the night on the dew, Sing, while the hours and the wild birds follow, Take flight and follow and find the sun.	O beautiful lips, O bosom 5 More white than the moon's and warm, A sterile, a ruinous blossom Is blown your way in a storm.
Sister, my sister, O soft light swallow, 25 Though all things feast in the spring's guest-chamber, How hast thou heart to be glad thereof yet? For where thou fliest I shall not follow, Till life forget and death remember, Till thou remember and I forget. 30	As the lost white feverish limbs Of the Lesbian Sappho, adrift 10 In foam where the sea-weed swims, Swam loose for the streams to lift,  My heart swims blind in a sea That stuns me; swims to and fro, And gathers to windward and lee 15 Lamentation, and mourning, and woe.
Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow, I know not how thou hast heart to sing. Hast thou the heart? is it all past over? Thy lord the summer is good to follow, And fair the feet of thy lover the spring: 35 But what wilt thou say to the spring thy lover?	A broken, an emptied boat, Sea saps it, winds blow apart, Sick and adrift and afloat, The barren waif of a heart. 20
O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow, My heart in me is a molten ember And over my head the waves have met. But thou wouldst tarry or I would follow, 40 Could I forget or thou remember, Couldst thou remember and I forget.	Where, when the gods would be cruel, Do they go for a torture? where Plant thorns, set pain like a jewel? Ah, not in the flesh, not there!
O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow, The heart's division divideth us. Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree; 45 But mine goes forth among sea-gulfs hollow To the place of the slaying of Itylus, The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.	The racks of earth and the rods 25 Are weak as foam on the sands; In the heart is the prey for gods, Who crucify hearts, not hands.
O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow, I pray thee sing not a little space. 50 Are not the roofs and the lintels wet? The woven web that was plain to follow, The small slain body, the flowerlike face, Can I remember if thou forget?	Mere pangs corrode and consume, Dead when life dies in the brain; 30 In the infinite spirit is room For the pulse of an infinite pain.
O sister, sister, thy first-begotten! 55 The hands that cling and the feet that follow, The voice of the child's blood crying yet: <i>Who hath remembered me? who hath forgotten?</i> Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow, But the world shall end when I forget. 60	I wish you were dead, my dear; I would give you, had I to give, Some death too bitter to fear; 35 It is better to die than live.
	I wish you were stricken of thunder And burnt with a bright flame through, Consumed and cloven in sunder, I dead at your feet like you. 40
	If I could but know after all, I might cease to hunger and ache, Though your heart were ever so small, If it were not a stone or a snake.
	You are crueler, you that we love, 45 Than hatred, hunger, or death; You have eyes and breasts like a dove, And you kill men's hearts with a breath.
	As plague in a poisonous city Insults and exults on her dead, 50 So you, when pallid for pity Comes love, and fawns to be fed.

## SATIA TE SANGUINE

IF YOU loved me ever so little,  
I could bear the bonds that gall,  
I could dream the bonds were brittle;  
You do not love me at all.

As a tame beast writhes and wheedles,  
 He fawns to be fed with wiles;  
 You carve him a cross of needles, 55  
 And whet them sharp as your smiles.

He is patient of thorn and whip,  
 He is dumb under ax or dart;  
 You suck with a sleepy red lip 60  
 The wet red wounds in his heart.

You thrill as his pulses dwindle,  
 You brighten and warm as he bleeds,  
 With insatiable eyes that kindle  
 And insatiable mouth that feeds.

Your hands nailed love to the tree, 65  
 You stripped him, scourged him with rods,  
 And drowned him deep in the sea  
 That hides the dead and their gods.

And for all this, die will he not;  
 There is no man sees him but I; 70  
 You came and went and forgot;  
 I hope he will some day die.

### A MATCH

IF LOVE were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf,  
 Our lives would grow together  
 In sad or singing weather,  
 Blown fields or flowerful closes, 5  
 Green pleasure or gray grief;  
 If love were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,  
 And love were like the tune, 10  
 With double sound and single  
 Delight our lips would mingle,  
 With kisses glad as birds are  
 That get sweet rain at noon;  
 If I were what the words are, 15  
 And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,  
 And I your love were death,  
 We'd shine and snow together  
 Ere March made sweet the weather 20  
 With daffodil and starling  
 And hours of fruitful breath;  
 If you were life, my darling,  
 And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow, 25  
 And I were page to joy,  
 We'd play for lives and seasons  
 With loving looks and treasons

And tears of night and morrow  
 And laughs of maid and boy; 30  
 If you were thrall to sorrow,  
 And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,  
 And I were lord in May,  
 We'd throw with leaves for hours 35  
 And draw for days with flowers,  
 Till day like night were shady  
 And night were bright like day;  
 If you were April's lady,  
 And I were lord in May. 40

If you were queen of pleasure,  
 And I were king of pain,  
 We'd hunt down love together,  
 Pluck out his flying-feather, 45  
 And teach his feet a measure,  
 And find his mouth a rein;  
 If you were queen of pleasure,  
 And I were king of pain.

### THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE<sup>1</sup>

HERE, where the world is quiet;  
 Here, where all trouble seems  
 Dead winds' and spent waves' riot  
 In doubtful dreams of dreams;  
 I watch the green field growing 5  
 For reaping folk and sowing,  
 For harvest-time and mowing,  
 A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,  
 And men that laugh and weep; 10  
 Of what may come hereafter  
 For men that sow to reap:  
 I am weary of days and hours,  
 Blown buds of barren flowers,  
 Desires and dreams and powers 15  
 And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,  
 And far from eye or ear  
 Wan waves and wet winds labor,  
 Weak ships and spirits steer; 20  
 They drive adrift, and whither  
 They wot not who make thither;  
 But no such winds blow hither,  
 And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice, 25  
 No heather-flower or vine,  
 But bloomless buds of poppies,  
 Green grapes of Prosperine,

<sup>1</sup>Prosperine was the wife of Pluto and queen of the lower world.

Pale beds of blowing rushes  
Where no leaf blooms or blushes 30  
Save this whereout she crushes  
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,  
In fruitless fields of corn,  
They bow themselves and slumber 35  
All night till light is born;  
And like a soul belated,  
In hell and heaven unmated,  
By cloud and mist abated  
Comes out of darkness morn. 40

Though one were strong as seven,  
He too with death shall dwell,  
Nor wake with wings in heaven,  
Nor weep for pains in hell;  
Though one were fair as roses, 45  
His beauty clouds and closes;  
And well though love reposes,  
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal, 49  
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands  
Who gathers all things mortal  
With cold immortal hands;  
Her languid lips are sweeter  
Than love's who fears to greet her  
To men that mix and meet her 55  
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,  
She waits for all men born;  
Forgets the earth her mother,<sup>1</sup>  
The life of fruits and corn; 60  
And spring and seed and swallow  
Take wing for her and follow  
Where summer song rings hollow  
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither, 65  
The old loves with wearier wings;  
And all dead years draw thither,  
And all disastrous things;  
Dead dreams of days forsaken,  
Blind buds that snows have shaken, 70  
Wild leaves that winds have taken,  
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,  
And joy was never sure;  
To-day will die to-morrow; 75  
Time stoops to no man's lure;  
And love, grown faint and fretful,  
With lips but half regretful  
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful  
Weeps that no loves endure. 80

From too much love of living,  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be 85  
That no life lives for ever;  
That dead men rise up never;  
That even the weariest river  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,  
Nor any change of light: 90  
Nor sound of waters shaken,  
Nor any sound or sight:  
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,  
Nor days nor things diurnal;  
Only the sleep eternal 95  
In an eternal night.

## AN INTERLUDE

IN THE greenest growth of the Maytime,  
I rode where the woods were wet,  
Between the dawn and the daytime;  
The spring was glad that we met.

There was something the season wanted, ' 5  
Though the ways and the woods smelt  
sweet;  
The breath at your lips that panted,  
The pulse of the grass at your feet.

You came, and the sun came after,  
And the green grew golden above; 10  
And the flag-flowers lightened with laughter,  
And the meadow-sweet shook with love.

Your feet in the full-grown grasses  
Moved soft as a weak wind blows;  
You passed me as April passes, 15  
With face made out of a rose.

By the stream where the stems were slender,  
Your bright foot paused at the sedge;  
It might be to watch the tender  
Light leaves in the springtime hedge, 20

On boughs that the sweet month blanches  
With flowery frost of May:  
It might be a bird in the branches,  
It might be a thorn in the way.

I waited to watch you linger 25  
With foot drawn back from the dew,  
Till a sunbeam straight like a finger  
Struck sharp through the leaves at you.

And a bird overhead sang *Follow*,  
And a bird to the right sang *Here*; 30  
And the arch of the leaves was hollow,  
And the meaning of May was clear.

<sup>1</sup>Her mother was Demeter, goddess of the earth.



I saw where the sun's hand pointed,  
 I knew what the bird's note said;  
 By the dawn and the dewfall anointed, 35  
 You were queen by the gold on your head.

As the glimpse of a burnt-out ember  
 Recalls a regret of the sun,  
 I remember, forget, and remember 40  
 What Love saw done and undone.

I remember the way we parted,  
 The day and the way we met;  
 You hoped we were both broken-hearted,  
 And knew we should both forget.

And May with her world in flower 45  
 Seemed still to murmur and smile  
 As you murmured and smiled for an hour;  
 I saw you turn at the stile.

A hand like a white wood-blossom  
 You lifted, and waved, and passed, 50  
 With head hung down to the bosom,  
 And pale, as it seemed, at last.

And the best and the worst of this is  
 That neither is most to blame  
 If you've forgotten my kisses 55  
 And I've forgotten your name.

### HERTHA<sup>1</sup>

I AM that which began;  
 Out of me the years roll;  
 Out of me God and man;  
 I am equal and whole;  
 God changes, and man, and the form of them  
 bodily; I am the soul. 5

Before ever land was,  
 Before ever the sea,  
 Or soft hair of the grass,  
 Or fair limbs of the tree,  
 Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches, I  
 was, and thy soul was in me. 10

First life on my sources  
 First drifted and swam;  
 Out of me are the forces  
 That save it or damn;  
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast  
 and bird; before God was, I am. 15

Beside or above me  
 Nought is there to go;  
 Love or unlove me,

Unknow me or know,  
 I am that which unloves me and loves; I am  
 stricken, and I am the blow. 20

I the mark that is missed  
 And the arrows that miss,  
 I the mouth that is kissed  
 And the breath in the kiss,  
 The search, and the sought, and the seeker,  
 the soul and the body that is. 25

I am that thing which blesses  
 My spirit elate;  
 That which caresses  
 With hands uncreate  
 My limbs unbegotten that measure the  
 length of the measure of fate. 30

But what things dost thou now,  
 Looking Godward, to cry  
 "I am I, thou art thou,  
 I am low, thou art high?"  
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him;  
 find thou but thyself, thou art I. 35

I the grain and the furrow,  
 The plow-cloven clod  
 And the plowshare drawn thorough,  
 The germ and the sod,  
 The deed and the doer, the seed and the  
 sower, the dust which is God. 40

Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,  
 Child, underground?  
 Fire that impassioned thee,  
 Iron that bound,  
 Dim changes of water, what thing of all these  
 hast thou known of or found? 45

Canst thou say in thine heart  
 Thou hast seen with thine eyes  
 With what cunning of art  
 Thou wast wrought in what wise,  
 By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen,  
 and shown on my breast to the skies? 50

Who hath given, who hath sold it thee,  
 Knowledge of me?  
 Hath the wilderness told it thee?  
 Hast thou learned of the sea?  
 Hast thou communed in spirit with night?  
 have the winds taken counsel with  
 thee? 55

Have I set such a star  
 To show light on thy brow  
 That thou sawest from afar  
 What I show to thee now?  
 Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sun  
 and the mountains and thou? 60

<sup>1</sup>This and the two following poems are from *Songs before Sunrise*. Hertha (or Nerthus) was the Germanic earth-mother, goddess of fertility and growing things.

What is here, dost thou know it?  
 What was, hast thou known?  
 Prophet nor poet  
 Nor tripod nor throne!  
 Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but  
 only thy mother alone. 65

Mother, not maker,  
 Born, and not made;  
 Though her children forsake her,  
 Allured or afraid,  
 Praying prayers to the God of their fashion,  
 she stirs not for all that have prayed. 70

A creed is a rod,  
 And a crown is of night;  
 But this thing is God,  
 To be man with thy might,  
 To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit,  
 and live out thy life as the light. 75

I am in thee to save thee,  
 As my soul in thee saith;  
 Give thou as I gave thee,  
 Thy life-blood and breath, 79  
 Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers of  
 thy thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving  
 As mine were to thee;  
 The free life of thy living,  
 Be the gift of it free;  
 Not as servant to lord, nor as master to slave,  
 shalt thou give thee to me. 85

O children of banishment,  
 Souls overcast,  
 Were the lights ye see vanish meant  
 Always to last,  
 Ye would know not the sun overshining the  
 shadows and stars overpast. 90

I that saw where ye trod  
 The dim paths of the night  
 Set the shadow called God  
 In your skies to give light;  
 But the morning of manhood is risen, and the  
 shadowless soul is in sight. 95

The tree many-rooted  
 That swells to the sky  
 With frondage red-fruited,  
 The life-tree am I;  
 In the buds of your lives is the sap of my  
 leaves: ye shall live and not die. 100

But the Gods of your fashion  
 That take and that give,  
 In their pity and passion

*I.e., nor priest nor king.*

That scourge and forgive,  
 They are worms that are bred in the bark that  
 falls off; they shall die and not live. 105

My own blood is what stanches  
 The wounds in my bark;  
 Stars caught in my branches  
 Make day of the dark,  
 And are worshiped as suns till the sunrise  
 shall tread out their fires as a spark. 110

Where dead ages hide under  
 The live roots of the tree,  
 In my darkness the thunder  
 Makes utterance of me;  
 In the clash of my boughs with each other ye  
 hear the waves sound of the sea. 115

\*That noise is of Time,  
 As his feathers are spread  
 And his feet set to climb  
 Through the boughs overhead, 119  
 And my foliage rings round him and rustles,  
 and branches are bent, with his tread.

The storm-winds of ages  
 Blow through me and cease,  
 The war-wind that rages,  
 The spring-wind of peace,  
 Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses,  
 ere one of my blossoms increase. 125

All sounds of all changes,  
 All shadows and lights  
 On the world's mountain-ranges  
 And stream-riven heights,  
 Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and lan-  
 guage of storm-clouds on earth-shaking  
 nights; 130

All forms of all faces,  
 All works of all hands  
 In unsearchable places  
 Of time-stricken lands,  
 All death and all life, and all reigns and all  
 ruins, drop through me as sands. 135

Though sore be my burden  
 And more than ye know,  
 And my growth have no guerdon  
 But only to grow,  
 Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings above  
 me or deathworms below. 140

These too have their part in me,  
 As I too in these;  
 Such fire is at heart in me,  
 Such sap is this tree's,  
 Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets of  
 infinite lands and of seas. 145

In the spring-colored hours  
 When my mind was as May's,  
 There brake forth of me flowers  
 By centuries of days,  
 Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood,  
 shot out from my spirit as rays. 150

And the sound of them springing  
 And smell of their shoots  
 Were as warmth and sweet singing  
 And strength to my roots;  
 And the lives of my children made perfect  
 with freedom of soul were my fruits. 155

I bid you but be;  
 I have need not of prayer;  
 I have need of you free  
 As your mouths of mine air;  
 That my heart may be greater within me, be-  
 holding the fruits of me fair. 160

More fair than strange fruit is  
 Of faiths ye espouse;  
 In me only the root is  
 That blooms in your boughs;  
 Behold now your God that ye made you, to  
 feed him with faith of your vows. 165

In the darkening and whitening  
 Abysses adored,  
 With dayspring and lightning  
 For lamp and for sword,  
 God thunders in heaven, and his angels are  
 red with the wrath of the Lord. 170

O my sons, O too dutiful  
 Toward Gods not of me,  
 Was not I enough beautiful?  
 Was it hard to be free?  
 For behold, I am with you, am in you and of  
 you; look forth now and see. 175

Lo, winged with world's wonders,  
 With miracles shod,  
 With the fires of his thunders  
 For raiment and rod,  
 God trembles in heaven, and his angels are  
 white with the terror of God. 180

For his twilight is come on him,  
 His anguish is here;  
 And his spirits gaze dumb on him,  
 Grown gray from his fear;  
 And his hour taketh hold on him stricken, the  
 last of his infinite year. 185

Thought made him and breaks him,  
 Truth slays and forgives;  
 But to you, as time takes him,  
 This new thing it gives,

Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds  
 upon freedom and lives. 190

For truth only is living,  
 Truth only is whole,  
 And the love of his giving  
 Man's polestar and pole;  
 Man, pulse of my center, and fruit of my  
 body, and seed of my soul. 195

One birth of my bosom;  
 One beam of mine eye;  
 One topmost blossom  
 That scales the sky;  
 Man, equal and one with me, man that is  
 made of me, man that is I. 200

### TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA

SEND but a song oversea for us,  
 Heart of their hearts who are free,  
 Heart of their singer, to be for us  
 More than our singing can be;  
 Ours, in the tempest at error, 5  
 With no light but the twilight of terror;  
 Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine-leaves and grasses,  
 And blown as a tree through and through  
 With the winds of the keen mountain-passes,  
 And tender as sun-smitten dew; 11  
 Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes  
 The wastes of your limitless lakes,  
 Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic 15  
 Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,  
 With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,  
 With thoughts as thunders in throng,  
 With consonant ardors of chords  
 That pierce men's souls as with swords 20  
 And hale them hearing along,

Make us too music, to be with us  
 As a word from a world's heart warm,  
 To sail the dark as a sea with us,  
 Full-sailed, outsing the storm, 25  
 A song to put fire in our ears  
 Whose burning shall burn up tears,  
 Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,  
 A word in the wind of cheer, 30  
 To consume as with lightning the carrion  
 That makes time foul for us here;  
 In the air that our dead things infest  
 A blast of the breath of the west,  
 Till east way as west way is clear. 35



Out of the sun beyond sunset, From the evening whence morning shall be, With the rollers in measureless onset, With the van of the storming sea, With the world-wide wind, with the breath 40 That breaks ships driven upon death, With the passion of all things free,	Till godlike, equal with time, It stand in the sun sublime, 90 In the godhead of man revealed.
With the sea-steeds footless and frantic, White myriads for death to bestride In the charge of the ruining Atlantic 45 Where deaths by regiments ride, With clouds and clamors of waters, With a long note shriller than slaughter's On the furrowless fields world-wide.	Round your people and over them Light like raiment is drawn, Close as a garment to cover them Wrought not of mail nor of lawn; 95 Here, with hope hardly to wear, Naked nations and bare Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.
With terror, with ardor and wonder, 50 With the soul of the season that wakes When the weight of a whole year's thunder In the tidestream of autumn breaks, Let the flight of the wide-winged word Come over, come in and be heard, 55 Take form and fire for our sakes.	Chains are here, and a prison, Kings, and subjects, and shame, 100 If the God upon you be arisen, How should our songs be the same? How, in confusion of change, How shall we sing, in a strange Land, songs praising his name? 105
For a continent bloodless with travail Here toils and brawls as it can, And the web of it who shall unravel Of all that peer on the plan; 60 Would fain grow men, but they grow not, And fain be free, but they know not One name for freedom and man?	God is buried and dead to us, Even the spirit of earth, Freedom; so have they said to us, Some with mocking and mirth, Some with heartbreak and tears; 110 And a God without eyes, without ears, Who shall sing of him, dead in the birth?
One name, not twain for division; One thing, not twain, from the birth; 65 Spirit and substance and vision, Worth more than worship is worth; Unbeheld, unadored, undivined, The cause, the center, the mind, The secret and sense of the earth. 70	The earth-god Freedom, the lonely Face lightening, the footprint unshod, Not as one man crucified only 115 Nor scourged with but one life's rod; The soul that is substance of nations, Reincarnate with fresh generations; The great god Man, which is God.
Here as a weakling in irons, Here as a weanling in bands, As a prey that the stake-net environs, Our life that we looked for stands; And the man-child naked and dear, 75 Democracy, turns on us here Eyes trembling with tremulous hands.	But in weariest of years and obscurest 120 Doth it live not at heart of all things, The one God and one spirit, a purest Life, fed from unstanchable springs? Within love, within hatred it is, And its seed in the stripe as the kiss, 125 And in slaves is the germ, and in kings.
It sees not what season shall bring to it Sweet fruit of its bitter desire; Few voices it hears yet sing to it, 80 Few pulses of hearts reaspire; Foresees not time, nor forehears The noises of imminent years, Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:	Freedom we call it, for holier Name of the soul's there is none; Surelier it labors, if slower, Than the meters of star or of sun; 130 Slower than life into breath, Surelier than time into death, It moves till its labor be done.
When crowned and weaponed and curbless It shall walk without helm or shield 86 The bare burnt furrows and herbless Of war's last flame-stricken field,	Till the motion be done and the measure Circling through season and clime, 135 Slumber and sorrow and pleasure, Vision of virtue and crime; Till consummate with conquering eyes, A soul disembodied, it rise From the body transfigured of time. 140

Till it rise and remain and take station  
 With the stars of the worlds that rejoice;  
 Till the voice of its heart's exultation  
 Be as theirs an invariable voice;  
 By no discord of evil estranged, 145  
 By no pause, by no breach in it changed,  
 By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,  
 With the spirit, the star, and the sod; 149  
 With the kingless and king-stricken nations,  
 With the cross, and the chain, and the rod;  
 The most high, the most secret, most lonely,  
 The earth-soul Freedom, that only  
 Lives, and that only is God. 154

### THE OBLATION

Ask nothing more of me, sweet;  
 All I can give you I give.  
 Heart of my heart, were it more,  
 More would be laid at your feet:  
 Love that should help you to live, 5  
 Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give  
 Once to have sense of you more,  
 Touch you and taste of you, sweet,  
 Think you and breathe you and live, 10  
 Swept of your wings as they soar,  
 Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more  
 Give you but love of you, sweet:  
 He that hath more, let him give; 15  
 He that hath wings, let him soar;  
 Mine is the heart at your feet  
 Here, that must love you to live.

### A FORSAKEN GARDEN<sup>1</sup>

IN a coign of the cliff between lowland and  
 highland,  
 At the sea-down's edge between windward  
 and lee,  
 Walled round with rocks as an inland island,  
 The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.  
 A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses 5  
 The steep square slope of the blossomless  
 bed  
 Where the weeds that grew green from the  
 graves of its roses  
 Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,  
 To the low last edge of the long lone land. 10  
 If a step should sound or a word be spoken,  
 Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's  
 hand?

So long have the gray bare walks lain guest-  
 less,  
 Through branches and briers if a man mak-  
 way,  
 He shall find no life but the sea-wind's,  
 restless 15  
 Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled  
 That crawls by a track none turn to climb  
 To the strait waste place that the years have  
 rifled  
 Of all but the thorns that are touched not  
 of time. 20  
 The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;  
 The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.  
 The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-  
 shaken,  
 These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls  
 not; 25  
 As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots  
 are dry;  
 From the thicket of thorns whence the night-  
 ingale calls not,  
 Could she call, there were never a rose to  
 reply.  
 Over the meadows that blossom and wither  
 Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song; 30  
 Only the sun and the rain come hither  
 All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels  
 One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.  
 Only the wind here hovers and revels 35  
 In a round where life seems barren as  
 death.  
 Here there was laughing of old, there was  
 weeping,  
 Haply, of lovers none ever will know,  
 Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping  
 Years ago. 40

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look  
 thither,"  
 Did he whisper? "look forth from the  
 flowers to the sea;  
 For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-  
 blossoms wither,  
 And men that love lightly may die—but  
 we?"

<sup>1</sup>This and the following poem are from *Poems and Ballads*,  
 Second Series.

And the same wind sang and the same waves  
whitened, 45  
And or ever the garden's last petals were  
shed,  
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that  
had lightened,  
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went  
whither?

And were one to the end—but what end  
who knows? 50

Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,  
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.  
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to  
love them?

What love was ever as deep as a grave?  
They are loveless now as the grass above them  
Or the wave. 56

All are at one now, roses and lovers,  
Not none of the cliffs and the fields and  
the sea.

Not a breath of the time that has been hovers  
In the air now soft with a summer to be. 60  
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons  
hereafter

Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now  
or weep,  
When as they that are free now of weeping and  
laughter  
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever; 65  
Here change may come not till all change  
end.

From the graves they have made they shall  
rise up never,  
Who have left nought living to ravage and  
rend.

Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground  
growing,

While the sun and the rain live, these shall  
be: 70

Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing  
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crum-  
ble,

Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs  
drink,

Till the strength of the waves of the high tides  
humble 75

The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,  
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,  
Stretched out on the spoils that his own  
hand spread,

As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,  
Death lies dead. 80

AVE ATQUE VALE

IN MEMORY OF CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

*Nous devrions pourtant lui porter quelques fleurs;  
Les morts, les pauvres morts, ont de grandes dou-  
leurs,*

*Et quand Octobre souffle, émondeur des vieux arbres,  
Son vent mélancolique à l'entour de leur marbres,  
Certe, ils doivent trouver les vivants bien ingrats.<sup>1</sup>*

—Les Fleurs du Mal.

I

SHALL I strew on thee rose or rue or laurel,  
Brother, on this that was the veil of thee?  
Or quiet sea-flower molded by the sea,  
Or simplest growth of meadow-sweet or sorrel,  
Such as the summer-sleepy Dryads  
weave, 5  
Waked up by snow-soft sudden rains at  
eve?

Or wilt thou rather, as on earth before,  
Half-faded fiery blossoms, pale with heat  
And full of bitter summer, but more sweet  
To thee than gleanings of a northern shore  
Trod by no tropic feet? 11

II

For always thee the fervid languid glories  
Allured of heavier suns in mightier skies;  
Thine ears knew all the wandering watery  
sighs

Where the sea sobs round Lesbian promon-  
tories, 15

The barren kiss of piteous wave to wave  
That knows not where is that Leucadian  
grave

Which hides too deep the supreme head of  
song.<sup>2</sup>

Ah, salt and sterile as her kisses were,  
The wild sea winds her and the green  
gulfs bear 20

Hither and thither, and vex and work her  
wrong,

Blind gods that cannot spare.

III

Thou sawest, in thine old singing season,  
brother,

Secrets and sorrows unbeheld of us:

Fierce loves, and lovely leaf-buds poison-  
ous 25

Bare to thy subtler eye, but for none other

<sup>1</sup>These lines from Baudelaire may be translated: Yet we should bestow him a few flowers; the dead, the poor dead, have great sorrows, and when October, pruner of ancient trees, breathes its sad wind about their tombs, certainly they must deem the living very thankless.

<sup>2</sup>Sappho, who was born on the island of Lesbos and was said to have cast herself into the sea from the Leucadian promontory.



Blowing by night in some unbreathed-in  
clime;  
The hidden harvest of luxurious time,  
Sin without shape, and pleasure without  
speech;  
And where strange dreams in a tumultu-  
ous sleep 30  
Make the shut eyes of stricken spirits  
weep;  
And with each face thou sawest the shadow  
on each,  
Seeing as men sow men reap.

## IV

O sleepless heart and somber soul unsleeping,  
That were athirst for sleep and no more  
life 35  
And no more love, for peace and no more  
strife!  
Now the dim gods of death have in their keep-  
ing  
Spirit and body and all the springs of  
song,  
Is it well now where love can do no wrong,  
Where stingless pleasure has no foam or  
fang 40  
Behind the unopening closure of her lips?  
Is it not well where soul from body slips  
And flesh from bone divides without a pang  
As dew from flower-bell drips?

## V

It is enough; the end and the beginning 45  
Are one thing to thee, who art past the  
end.  
O hand unclasped of unbeholden friend,  
For thee no fruits to pluck, no palms for win-  
ning,  
No triumph and no labor and no lust,  
Only dead yew-leaves and a little dust.  
O quiet eyes wherein the light saith nought, 51  
Whereto the day is dumb, nor any night  
With obscure finger silences your sight,  
Nor in your speech the sudden soul speaks  
thought,  
Sleep, and have sleep for light. 55

## VI

Now all strange hours and all strange loves  
are over,  
Dreams and desires and somber songs  
and sweet,  
Hast thou found place at the great knees  
and feet  
Of some pale Titan-woman like a lover,  
Such as thy vision here solicited,<sup>1</sup> 60  
Under the shadow of her fair vast head,

The deep division of prodigious breasts,  
The solemn slope of mighty limbs asleep,  
The weight of awful tresses that still keep  
The savor and shade of old-world pine-forests  
Where the wet hill-winds weep? 66

## VII

Hast thou found any likeness for thy vision?  
O gardener of strange flowers, what bud,  
what bloom,  
Hast thou found sown, what gathered in  
the gloom?  
What of despair, of rapture, of derision, 70  
What of life is there, what of ill or good?  
Are the fruits gray like dust or bright like  
blood?  
Does the dim ground grow any seed of ours,  
The faint fields quicken any terrene root,  
In low lands where the sun and moon are  
mute 75  
And all the stars keep silence? Are there  
flowers  
At all, or any fruit?

## VIII

Alas, but though my flying song flies after,  
O sweet strange elder singer, thy more  
fleet  
Singing, and footprints of thy fleeter feet,  
Some dim derision of mysterious laughter 81  
From the blind tongueless warders of the  
dead,  
Some gainless glimpse of Prosperine's  
veiled head,  
Some little sound of unregarded tears  
Wept by effaced unprofitable eyes, 85  
And from pale mouths some cadence of  
dead sighs—  
These only, these the hearkening spirit hears,  
Sees only such things rise.

## IX

Thou art far too far for wings of words to  
follow,  
Far too far off for thought or any prayer.  
What ails us with thee, who art wind and  
air? 91  
What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?  
Yet with some fancy, yet with some  
desire,  
Dreams pursue death as winds a flying  
fire,  
Our dreams pursue our dead and do not find.  
Still, and more swift than they, the thin  
flame flies, 96  
The low light fails us in elusive skies,  
Still the foiled earnest ear is deaf, and blind  
Are still the eluded eyes.

<sup>1</sup>See Baudelaire's *La Géante*.

X

Not thee, O never thee, in all time's changes,  
 Not thee, but this the sound of thy sad  
 soul, 101  
 The shadow of thy swift spirit, this shut  
 scroll  
 I lay my hand on, and not death estranges  
 My spirit from communion of thy song—  
 These memories and these melodies that  
 throng 105  
 Veiled porches of a Muse funereal—  
 These I salute, these touch, these clasp  
 and fold  
 As though a hand were in my hand to  
 hold,  
 Or through mine ears a mourning musical  
 Of many mourners rolled. 110

XI

I among these, I also, in such station  
 As when the pyre was charred, and piled  
 the sods,  
 And offering to the dead made, and their  
 gods,  
 The old mourners had, standing to make  
 libation,  
 I stand, and to the gods and to the dead  
 Do reverence without prayer or praise,  
 and shed 116  
 Offering to these unknown, the gods of gloom,  
 And what of honey and spice my seed-  
 lands bear,  
 And what I may of fruits in this chilled  
 air,  
 And lay, Orestes-like,<sup>1</sup> across the tomb 120  
 A curl of severed hair.

XII

But by no hand nor any treason stricken,  
 Not like the low-lying head of Him, the  
 King,<sup>2</sup>  
 The flame that made of Troy a ruinous  
 thing,  
 Thou liest, and on this dust no tears could  
 quicken 125  
 There fall no tears like theirs that all men  
 hear  
 Fall tear by sweet imperishable tear  
 Down the opening leaves of holy poets' pages.  
 Thee not Orestes, not Electra mourns;  
 But bending us-ward with memorial urns  
 The most high Muses that fulfill all ages 131  
 Weep, and our God's heart yearns.

XIII

For, sparing of his sacred strength, not often  
 Among us darkling here the lord of light  
 Makes manifest his music and his might  
 In hearts that open and in lips that soften 136  
 With the soft flame and heat of songs that  
 shine.  
 Thy lips indeed he touched with bitter  
 wine,  
 And nourished them indeed with bitter bread;  
 Yet surely from his hand thy soul's food  
 came, 140  
 The fire that scarred thy spirit at his  
 flame  
 Was lighted, and thine hungering heart he fed  
 Who feeds our hearts with fame.

XIV

Therefore he too now at thy soul's sunseting,  
 God of all suns and songs, he too bends  
 down 145  
 To mix his laurel with thy cypress crown,  
 And save thy dust from blame and from for-  
 getting.  
 Therefore he too, seeing all thou wert and  
 art,  
 Compassionate, with sad and sacred  
 heart,  
 Mourns thee of many his children the last  
 dead, 150  
 And hallows with strange tears and alien  
 sighs  
 Thine unmelodious mouth and sunless  
 eyes,  
 And over thine irrevocable head  
 Sheds light from the under skies.

XV

And one weeps with him in the ways Lethean,  
 And stains with tears her changing bosom  
 chill: 156  
 That obscure Venus of the hollow hill,<sup>3</sup>  
 That thing transformed which was the  
 Cytherean,  
 With lips that lost their Grecian laugh  
 divine  
 Long since, and face no more called  
 Erycine,<sup>4</sup> 160  
 A ghost, a bitter and luxurious god.  
 Thee also with fair flesh and singing spell  
 Did she, a sad and second prey, compel  
 Into the footless places once more trod,  
 And shadows hot from hell. 165

<sup>3</sup>The Venus of medieval legend, fabled to hold her court in the recesses of the Venusberg, or Hörseberg, in central Germany.

<sup>4</sup>So called because there was a temple to Aphrodite Urania (the goddess of heavenly love) at Eryx, in Sicily.

<sup>1</sup>See Æschylus, *Choëphoræ*, 4-8.

<sup>2</sup>Agamemnon.

## XVI

And now no sacred staff shall break in blossom,<sup>1</sup>  
 No choral salutation lure to light  
 A spirit sick with perfume and sweet night  
 And love's tired eyes and hands and barren bosom.  
 There is no help for these things; none to mend 170  
 And none to mar; not all our songs, O friend,  
 Will make death clear or make life durable.  
 Howbeit with rose and ivy and wild vine  
 And with wild notes about this dust of thine  
 At least I fill the place where white dreams dwell 175  
 And wreath an unseen shrine.

## XVII

Sleep; and if life was bitter to thee, pardon,  
 If sweet, give thanks; thou hast no more to live;  
 And to give thanks is good, and to forgive.  
 Out of the mystic and the mournful garden  
 Where all day through thine hands in barren braid 181  
 Wove the sick flowers of secrecy and shade,  
 Green buds of sorrow and sin, and remnants gray,  
 Sweet-smelling, pale with poison, sanguine-hearted,  
 Passions that sprang from sleep and thoughts that started, 185  
 Shall death not bring us all as thee one day  
 Among the days departed?

## XVIII

For thee, O now a silent soul, my brother,  
 Take at my hands this garland, and farewell.  
 Thin is the leaf, and chill the wintry smell, 190  
 And chill the solemn earth, a fatal mother,  
 With sadder than the Niobe<sup>2</sup> womb,  
 And in the hollow of her breasts a tomb.

<sup>1</sup>The allusion is to Tannhäuser who, after spending a year with Lady Venus in the Venusberg, went to Rome and asked for absolution. The pope told him that as little as the dry staff he held in his hand could grow green again, so little could Tannhäuser have God's mercy. After Tannhäuser's departure, however, the staff began to bud, and the pope sent messengers to search for him, but he had gone back to the Venusberg.

<sup>2</sup>Niobe, with fourteen children, boasted of her superiority to the goddess Latona, with her two, whereupon all of Niobe's children were slain.

Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are done;  
 There lies not any troublous thing before,  
 Nor sight nor sound to war against thee more, 196  
 For whom all winds are quiet as the sun,  
 All waters as the shore.

FIRST FOOTSTEPS<sup>3</sup>

A LITTLE way, more soft and sweet  
 Than fields aflower with May,  
 A babe's feet, venturing, scarce complete  
 A little way.

Eyes full of dawning day 5  
 Look up for mother's eyes to meet,  
 Too blithe for song to say.

Glad as the golden spring to greet  
 Its first live leaflet's play,  
 Love, laughing, leads the little feet 10  
 A little way.

## THE ROUNDEL

A ROUNDEL is wrought as a ring or a star-bright sphere,  
 With craft of delight and with cunning of sound unsought,  
 That the heart of the hearer may smile if to pleasure his ear  
 A roundel is wrought. 4

Its jewel of music is carven of all or of aught—  
 Love, laughter, or mourning—remembrance of rapture or fear—  
 That fancy may fashion to hang in the ear of thought.

As a bird's quick song runs round, and the hearts in us hear  
 Pause answer to pause, and again the same strain caught,  
 So moves the device whence, round as a pearl or tear, 10  
 A roundel is wrought.

<sup>3</sup>This and the following poem are from *A Century of Roundels*. The roundel, or rondel, is a French lyric form having but two rhimes. It commonly has fourteen lines, of which the first two are repeated as the seventh and eighth and as the thirteenth and fourteenth.



ON THE DEATHS OF  
THOMAS CARLYLE AND  
GEORGE ELIOT<sup>1</sup>

Two souls diverse out of our human sight  
Pass, followed one with love and each with  
wonder:  
The stormy sophist with his mouth of  
thunder,  
Clothed with loud words and mantled in the  
might

<sup>1</sup>From *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems*. Carlyle  
and George Eliot both died in 1881.

Of darkness and magnificence of night; 5  
And one whose eye could smite the night  
in sunder,  
Searching if light or no light were there-  
under,  
And found in love of loving-kindness light. 9  
Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire  
Still following Righteousness with deep desire  
Shone sole and stern before her and above,  
Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more  
sweet  
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly  
feet,  
The light of little children, and their love.

## GEORGE MEREDITH (1828-1909)

Meredith was born in Portsmouth on 12 February, 1828. His father was a tailor and naval outfitter doing business there, whose fortunes rapidly declined after the death of Meredith's mother in 1833. The boy's first ten or twelve years were spent at Portsmouth, where his education was begun. Later he attended schools at Southsea, and in 1843 was sent to the Moravian School at Neuwied, on the Rhine, not far from Coblenz. On his return to England at the close of 1844 he was articled to a solicitor in London. He could not, however, see any future for himself in the law, and soon turned to journalism, a calling which he followed, regularly for some years, managing to derive a bare subsistence from the work. In 1849 he married Mrs. Nicolls, who was about seven years older than himself, and who was the widowed daughter of Thomas Love Peacock. The marriage was, as Meredith later said, a blunder, and after a few years the two separated. In 1851 Meredith published his first volume of poems, and four years later his first volume of prose, an oriental fantasy entitled *The Shaving of Shagpat*. These volumes at the time attracted little or no notice, and though with the publication of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859) and of *Modern Love and Other Poems* (1862) he began to be recognized by competent judges as a significant novelist and poet, still, he signally failed to win the generality of readers, and was forced to conclude that he could not hope to make a living from books. He consequently continued his journalistic work, and in 1862 began a period of many years' service, as a reader and editorial adviser to the publishing firm of Chapman and Hall. In 1861 Meredith's wife died, and in 1864 he married Marie Vulliamy, who was his deeply loved companion until her death in 1885.

In 1867 the Merediths moved to Flint Cottage, facing Box Hill, near Burford Bridge, in Mickleham, and here Meredith lived and worked through the remainder of his life. At Flint Cottage the great novels of his maturity were written, *Beauchamp's Career* (1876), *The Egoist* (1879), *The Tragic Comedians* (1880), *Diana of the Crossways* (1885), and the more difficult novels of his later years, *One of our Conquerors* (1891), *Lord Ormont and his Aminta* (1894), and *The Amazing Marriage* (1895). Here also were written the poems published in *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth* (1883), *Ballads and Poems of Tragic Life* (1887), *A Reading of Earth* (1888), *The Empty Purse, and Other Poems* (1892), *Odes in Contribution to the Song of French History* (1898),

and *A Reading of Life, with Other Poems* (1901). With the publication of *The Egoist* Meredith's greatness became unmistakably evident, and with *Diana of the Crossways* came something like popular success, particularly in America. In 1905 Meredith received the Order of Merit, a distinguished honor which has been bestowed on only a very few men of letters. He died at Flint Cottage on 18 May, 1909. Burial in Westminster Abbey was refused by the Dean, despite the expressed wish of Edward VII, and he was buried in Dorking Cemetery beside his wife, where he himself had wished to be buried.

The charge of obscurity has frequently been leveled against Meredith's novels and poems. The obscurity, though it is not a serious difficulty in some of his best work, cannot be denied, but it can be explained. Meredith united with profound insight into human character and motives a remarkably quick and restless imagination which hurried him along in a maze of boldly figurative language which sometimes leaves the slower-minded reader perplexed and breathless. In addition, he had too little of the great artist's sense for economy of effort. The riches of his understanding gave him much to say, and at times he forgot that he could scarcely say everything, with the result that, instead of exercising the supreme tact involved in the art of selection and omission, he attempted to compress far more into a sentence or a phrase than the words could hold. Nor is this all, for Meredith accepted without reservations the new gospel of evolution, and attempted to interpret the meaning of life as he felt and experienced it in terms of evolutionary concepts. He thus became a worshiper of Earth as the stern, just mother of men and all that they are, while he continued to believe confidently in the reality of man's spiritual nature. This contradiction in his beliefs he attempted to bridge by intensity of feeling; with the consequence that, particularly in some of his poems, he strained language in the effort to convey through words and images a conviction which was really inarticulate. On the other hand, not only has Meredith's obscurity been exaggerated by some of his critics, but thoughtful readers have long since become assured that the difficulties of his writings are amply compensated by the rewards of his insight and of the truth and depth of his feeling. His was a sane nature, bravely, even heroically, struggling in an age drunken with material "progress" to maintain some hold on immaterial reality.

JUGGLING JERRY<sup>1</sup>

## I

PITCH here the tent, while the old horse grazes:  
 By the old hedge-side we'll halt a stage.  
 It's nigh my last above the daisies:  
 My next leaf'll be man's blank page.  
 Yes, my old girl! and it's no use crying: 5  
 Juggler, constable, king, must bow.  
 One that outjuggles all's been spying  
 Long to have me, and he has me now.

## II

We've traveled times to this old common:  
 Often we've hung our pots in the gorse. 10  
 We've had a stirring life, old woman!  
 You, and I, and the old gray horse.  
 Races, and fairs, and royal occasions,  
 Found us coming to their call:  
 Now they'll miss us at our stations: 15  
 There's a Juggler outjuggles all!

## III

Up goes the lark, as if all were jolly!  
 Over the duck-pond the willow shakes.  
 Easy to think that grieving's folly,  
 When the hand's firm as driven stakes! 20  
 Ay, when we're strong, and braced, and man-  
 ful,  
 Life's a sweet fiddle: but we're a batch  
 Born to become the Great Juggler's han'ful:  
 Balls he shies up, and is safe to catch.

## IV

Here's where the lads of the village cricket: 25  
 I was a lad not wide from here:  
 Couldn't I whip off the bail from the wicket?  
 Like an old world those days appear!  
 Donkey, sheep, geese, and thatched alehouse  
 —I know them! 29  
 They are old friends of my halts, and seem,  
 Somehow, as if kind thanks I owe them:  
 Juggling don't hinder the heart's esteem.

## V

Juggling's no sin, for we must have victual:  
 Nature allows us to bait for the fool.  
 Holding one's own makes us juggle no little; 35  
 But, to increase it, hard juggling's the rule.  
 You that are sneering at my profession,  
 Haven't you juggled a vast amount?  
 There's the Prime Minister, in one Session, 39  
 Juggles more games than my sins'll count.

## VI

I've murdered insects with mock thunder:  
 Conscience, for that, in men don't quail.  
 I've made bread from the bump of wonder:  
 That's my business, and there's my tale.  
 Fashion and rank all praised the professor: 45  
 Ay! and I've had my smile from the Queen:  
 Bravo, Jerry! she meant: God bless her!  
 Ain't this a sermon on that scene?

## VII

I've studied men from my topsy-turvy  
 Close, and, I reckon, rather true. 50  
 Some are fine fellows: some, right scurvy:  
 Most, a dash between the two.  
 But it's a woman, old girl, that makes me  
 Think more kindly of the race:  
 And it's a woman, old girl, that shakes me 55  
 When the Great Juggler I must face.

## VIII

We two were married, due and legal:  
 Honest we've lived since we've been one.  
 Lord! I could then jump like an eagle:  
 You danced bright as a bit o' the sun. 60  
 Birds in a May-bush we were! right merry!  
 All night we kissed, we juggled all day.  
 Joy was the heart of Juggling Jerry!  
 Now from his old girl he's juggled away.

## IX

It's past parsons to console us: 65  
 No, nor no doctor fetch for me:  
 I can die without my bolus;<sup>2</sup>  
 Two of a trade, lass, never agree!  
 Parson and Doctor!—don't they love rarely  
 Fighting the devil in other men's fields! 70  
 Stand up yourself and match him fairly:  
 Then see how the rascal yields!

## X

I, lass, have lived no gypsy, flaunting  
 Finery while his poor helpmate grubs: 74  
 Coin I've stored, and you won't be wanting:  
 You sha'n't beg from the troughs and tubs.  
 Nobly you've stuck to me, though in his  
 kitchen  
 Many a Marquis would hail you Cook!  
 Palaces you could have ruled and grown rich  
 in,  
 But your old Jerry you never forsook. 80

## XI

Hand up the chirper!<sup>1</sup> ripe ale winks in it;  
 Let's have comfort and be at peace.  
 Once a stout draught made me light as a linnet.  
 Cheer up! the Lord must have his lease. 84

<sup>1</sup>The following poems are reprinted with the permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons from the Memorial Edition of Meredith's Works. *Juggling Jerry* was published in 1859.

<sup>2</sup>Large pill.

<sup>3</sup>Glass.



May be—for none see in that black hollow—  
 It's just a place where we're held in pawn,  
 And, when the Great Juggler makes as to  
 swallow,  
 It's just the sword-trick—I ain't quite  
 gone!

## XII

Yonder came smells of the gorse, so nutty,  
 Gold-like and warm: it's the prime of May.  
 Better than mortar, brick and putty, 91  
 Is God's house on a blowing day.  
 Lean me more up the mound; now I feel it:  
 All the old heath-smells! Ain't it strange?  
 There's the world laughing, as if to conceal it,  
 But He's by us, juggling the change. 96

## XIII

I mind it well, by the sea-beach lying,  
 Once—it's long gone—when two gulls we  
 beheld,  
 Which, as the moon got up, were flying  
 Down a big wave that sparked and swelled.  
 Crack, went a gun: one fell: the second 101  
 Wheeled round him twice, and was off for  
 new luck:  
 There in the dark her white wing beckoned:—  
 Drop me a kiss—I'm the bird dead-struck!

## THE BEGGAR'S SOLILO- QUY<sup>1</sup>

## I

Now, this, to my notion, is pleasant cheer,  
 To lie all alone on a ragged heath,  
 Where your nose isn't sniffing for bones or  
 beer,  
 But a peat-fire smells like a garden beneath.  
 The cottagers bustle about the door, 5  
 And the girl at the window ties her strings.  
 She's a dish for a man who's a mind to be poor;  
 Lord! women are such expensive things.

## II

We don't marry beggars, says she: why, no:  
 It seems that to make 'em is what you do;  
 And as I can cook, and scour, and sew, 11  
 I needn't pay half my victuals for you.  
 A man for himself should be able to scratch,  
 But tickling's a luxury:—love, indeed!  
 Love burns as long as the lucifer match, 15  
 Wedlock's the candle! Now, that's my  
 creed.

## III

The church-bells sound water-like over the  
 wheat;

And up the long path troop pair after pair  
 The man's well-brushed, and the woman looks  
 neat:

It's man and woman everywhere! 20  
 Unless, like me, you lie here flat,  
 With a donkey for friend, you must have a  
 wife:

She pulls out your hair, but she brushes your  
 hat.

Appearances make the best half of life.

## IV

You nice little madam! you know you're nice.  
 I remember hearing a parson say 26  
 You're a plateful of vanity peppered with vice;  
 Yon chap at the gate thinks t' other way.  
 On his waistcoat you read both his head and  
 his heart:

There's a whole week's wages there figured  
 in gold! 30

Yes! when you turn round you may well give  
 a start:

It's fun to a fellow who's getting old.

## V

Now, that's a good craft, weaving waistcoats  
 and flowers,

And selling of ribbons, and scenting of lard:  
 It gives you a house to get in from the showers,  
 And food when your appetite jockeys you  
 hard. 36

You live a respectable man; but I ask  
 If it's worth the trouble? You use your  
 tools,

And spend your time, and what's your task?  
 Why, to make a slide for a couple of fools.

## VI

You can't match the color o' these heath  
 mounds, 41

Nor better that peat-fire's agreeable smell.  
 I'm clothed-like with natural sights and  
 sounds;

To myself I'm in tune: I hope you're as well.  
 You jolly old cot! though you don't own  
 coal: 45

It's a generous pot that's boiled with peat.  
 Let the Lord Mayor o' London roast oxen  
 whole:

His smoke, at least, don't smell so sweet.

## VII

I'm not a low Radical, hating the laws,

Who'd the aristocracy rebuke. 50

I talk o' the Lord Mayor o' London because

I once was on intimate terms with his cook.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1861.

I served him a turn,<sup>1</sup> and got pensioned on scraps,  
 And, Lord, Sir! didn't I envy his place,  
 Till Death knocked him down with the softest  
 of taps, 55  
 And I knew what was meant by a tallowy  
 face!

## VIII

On the contrary, I'm Conservative quite;  
 There's beggars in Scripture 'mongst Gen-  
 tiles and Jews:  
 It's nonsense, trying to set things right, 59  
 For if people will give, why, who'll refuse?  
 That stopping old custom wakes my spleen:  
 The poor and the rich both in giving agree:  
 Your tight-fisted shopman's the Radical mean:  
 There's nothing in common 'twixt him and  
 me.

## IX

He says I'm no use! but I won't reply. 65  
 You're lucky not being of use to him!  
 On week-days he's playing at Spider and Fly,  
 And on Sundays he sings about Cherubim!  
 Nailing shillings to counters is his chief work:  
 He nods now and then at the name on his  
 door: 70  
 But judge of us two, at a bow and a smirk,  
 I think I'm his match: and I'm honest—  
 that's more.

## X

No use! well, I mayn't be. You ring a pig's  
 snout,  
 And then call the animal glutton! Now, he,  
 Mr. Shopman, he's nought but a pipe and a  
 spout 75  
 Who won't let the goods o' this world pass  
 free.  
 This blazing blue weather all round the brown  
 crop,  
 He can't enjoy! all but cash he hates.  
 He's only a snail that crawls under his shop;  
 Though he has got the ear o' the magi-  
 strates. 80

## XI

Now, giving and taking's a proper exchange,  
 Like question and answer: you're both  
 content.  
 But buying and selling seems always strange;  
 You're hostile, and that's the thing that's  
 meant. 84  
 It's man against man—you're almost brutes;  
 There's here no thanks, and there's there  
 no pride.  
 If Charity's Christian, don't blame my pur-  
 suits,  
 I carry a touchstone by which you're tried.

## XII

—"Take it," says she, "it's all I've got":  
 I remember a girl in London streets: 90  
 She stood by a coffee-stall, nice and hot,  
 My belly was like a lamb that bleats.  
 Says I to myself, as her shilling I seized,  
 You haven't a character here, my dear!  
 But for making a rascal like me so pleased, 95  
 I'll give you one, in a better sphere!

## XIII

And that's where it is—she made me feel  
 I was a rascal: but people who scorn,  
 And tell a poor patch-breech he isn't genteel,  
 Why, they make him kick up—and he  
 treads on a corn. 100  
 It isn't liking, it's curst ill-luck,  
 Drives half of us into the begging-trade:  
 If for taking to water you praise a duck,  
 For taking to beer why a man upbraid?

## XIV

The sermon's over: they're out of the porch,  
 And it's time for me to move a leg; 106  
 But in general people who come from church,  
 And have called themselves sinners, hate  
 chaps to beg.  
 I'll wager they'll all of 'em dine to-day!  
 I was easy half a minute ago. 110  
 If that isn't pig that's baking away,  
 May I perish!—we're never contented—  
 heigho!

GRANDFATHER  
BRIDGEMAN<sup>2</sup>

## I

"HEIGH, boys!" cried Grandfather Bridge-  
 man, "it's time before dinner to-day."  
 He lifted the crumpled letter, and thumped a  
 surprising "Hurrah!"  
 Up jumped all the echoing young ones, but  
 John, with the starch in his throat,  
 Said, "Father, before we make noises, let's  
 see the contents of the note."  
 The old man glared at him harshly, and  
 twinkling made answer: "Too bad! 5  
 John Bridgeman, I'm always the whisky, and  
 you are the water, my lad!"

## II

But soon it was known through the house,  
 and the house ran over for joy,  
 That news, good news, great marvels, had  
 come from the soldier boy;

<sup>1</sup>Did him a favor.<sup>2</sup>Published in 1862.

Young Tom,<sup>1</sup> the luckless scapegrace, off-  
shoot of Methodist John;  
His grandfather's evening tale, whom the old  
man hailed as his son. 10  
And the old man's shout of pride was a shout  
of his victory, too;  
For he called his affection a method: the  
neighbors' opinions he knew.

## III

Meantime, from the morning table removing  
the stout breakfast cheer,  
The drink of the three generations, the milk,  
the tea, and the beer  
(Alone in its generous reading of pints stood  
the Grandfather's jug), 15  
The women for sight of the missive came  
pressing to coax and to hug.  
He scattered them quick, with a buss and a  
smack; thereupon he began  
Diversions with John's little Sarah: on Sun-  
day, the naughty old man!

## IV

Then messengers sped to the maltster, the  
auctioneer, miller, and all  
The seven sons of the farmer who housed in  
the range of his call. 20  
Likewise the married daughters, three plenti-  
ful ladies, prime cooks,  
Who bowed to him while they condemned, in  
meek hope to stand high in his books.  
"John's wife is a fool at a pudding," they said,  
and the light carts up hill  
Went merrily, flouting the Sabbath: for pud-  
dings well made mend a will.

## V

The day was a van-bird of summer: the robin  
still piped, but the blue, 25  
As a warm and dreamy palace with voices of  
larks ringing through,  
Looked down as if wistfully eyeing the blos-  
soms that fell from its lap:  
A day to sweeten the juices: a day to quicken  
the sap.  
All round the shadowy orchard sloped mead-  
ows in gold, and the dear  
Shy violets breathed their hearts out: the  
maiden breath of the year! 30

## VI

Full time there was before dinner to bring  
fifteen of his blood,

<sup>1</sup>He was fighting in the Crimean War. In the battle (on 5 November, 1854) in which he won glory, the English and French defeated the Russians, who had made an unexpected attack on the English camp at Inkerman, near Sebastopol.

To sit at the old man's table: they found  
that the dinner was good.  
But who was she by the lilacs and pouring  
laburnums concealed,  
When under the blossoming apple the chair  
of the Grandfather wheeled?  
She heard one little child crying, "Dear brave  
Cousin Tom!" as it leapt; 35  
Then murmured she: "Let me spare them!"  
and passed round the walnuts, and wept.

## VII

Yet not from sight had she slipped ere femi-  
nine eyes could detect  
The figure of Mary Charlworth. "It's just  
what we all might expect,"  
Was uttered: and: "Didn't I tell you?" Of  
Mary the rumor resounds,  
That she is now her own mistress, and mistress  
of five thousand pounds. 40  
'Twas she, they say, who cruelly sent young  
Tom to the war.  
Miss Mary, we thank you now! If you knew  
what we're thanking you for!

## VIII

But, "Have her in: let her hear it," called  
Grandfather Bridgeman, elate,  
While Mary's black-gloved fingers hung trem-  
bling with flight on the gate.  
Despite the women's remonstrance, two little  
ones, lighter than deer, 45  
Were loosed, and Mary, imprisoned, her whole  
face white as a tear,  
Came forward with culprit footsteps. Her  
punishment was to commence:  
The pity in her pale visage they read in a  
different sense.

## IX

"You perhaps may remember a fellow, Miss  
Charlworth, a sort of black sheep,"  
The old man turned his tongue to ironical  
utterance deep: 50  
"He came of a Methodist dad, so it wasn't  
his fault if he kicked.  
He earned a sad reputation, but Methodists  
are mortal strict.  
His name was Tom, and, dash me! but  
Bridgeman I think you might add:  
Whatever he was, bear in mind that he came  
of a Methodist dad."

## X

This prelude dismally lengthened, till Mary,  
starting, exclaimed, 55  
"A letter, Sir, from your grandson?" "Tom  
Bridgeman that rascal is named,"



The old man answered, and further, the words  
that sent Tom to the ranks  
Repeated as words of a person to whom they  
all owed mighty thanks.  
But Mary never blushed: with her eyes on the  
letter, she sate,  
And twice interrupting him faltered, "The  
date, may I ask, Sir, the date?" 60

## XI

"Why, that's what I never look at in a letter,"  
the farmer replied:  
"Facts first! and now I'll be parson." The  
Bridgeman women descried  
A quiver on Mary's eyebrows. One turned,  
and while shifting her comb,  
Said low to a sister: "I'm certain she knows  
more than we about Tom.  
She wants him now he's a hero!" The same,  
resuming her place, 65  
Begged Mary to check them the moment she  
found it a tedious case.

## XII

Then as a mastiff swallows the snarling noises  
of cats,  
The voice of the farmer opened. "'Three  
cheers, and off with your hats!'  
—That's Tom. 'We've beaten them, Daddy,  
and tough work it was, to be sure!  
A regular stand-up combat: eight hours smell-  
ing powder and gore. 70  
I entered it Sergeant-Major,'—and now he  
commands a salute,  
And carries the flag of old England! Heigh!  
see him lift foes on his foot!

## XIII

"—An officer! ay, Miss Charlworth, he is, or  
he is so to be;  
You'll own war isn't such humbug: and Glory  
means something, you see.  
'But don't say a word,' he continues, 'against  
the brave French any more.' 75  
—That stopped me; we'll now march together.  
I couldn't read further before.  
That 'brave French' I couldn't stomach. He  
can't see their cunning to get  
Us Britons to fight their battles, while best half  
the winnings they net!"

## XIV

The old man sneered, and read forward. It  
was of that desperate fight;—  
The Muscovite stole through the mist-wreaths  
that wrapped the chill Inkermann height,  
Where stood our silent outposts: old England  
was in them that day! 81

O sharp worked his ruddy wrinkles, as if to  
the breath of the fray  
They moved! He sat bareheaded: his long  
hair over him slow  
Swung white as the silky bog-flowers in purple  
heath-hollows that grow.

## XV

And louder at Tom's first person: acute and  
in thunder the "I" 85  
Invaded the ear with a whinny of triumph,  
that seemed to defy  
The hosts of the world. All heated, what  
wonder he little could brook  
To catch the sight of Mary's demure puri-  
tanical look?  
And still as he led the onslaught, his treacher-  
ous side-shots he sent  
At her who was fighting a battle as fierce, and  
who sat there unbent. 90

## XVI

"We stood in line, and like hedgehogs the  
Russians rolled under us thick.  
They frightened me there.'—He's no coward;  
for when, Miss, they came at the quick,  
The sight, he swears, was a breakfast.—'My  
stomach felt tight: in a glimpse  
I saw you snoring at home with the dear  
cuddled-up little imps.  
And then like the winter brickfields at mid-  
night, hot fire lengthened out. 95  
Our fellows were just leashed bloodhounds:  
no heart of the lot faced about.

## XVII

"And only that grumbler, Bob Harris, re-  
marked that we stood one to ten:  
'Ye fool,' says Mick Grady, 'just tell 'em  
they know how to compliment men!'  
And I sang out your old words: "If the op-  
posite side isn't God's,  
Heigh! after you've counted a dozen, the  
pluckiest lads have the odds." 100  
Ping-ping flew the enemy's pepper: the Colo-  
nel roared, Forward, and we  
Went at them. 'Twas first like a blanket:  
and then a long plunge in the sea.

## XVIII

"Well, now about me and the Frenchman:  
it happened I can't tell you how:  
And, Grandfather, hear, if you love me, and  
put aside prejudice now':  
He never says 'Grandfather'—Tom don't—  
save it's a serious thing. 105  
'Well, there were some pits for the rifles, just  
dug on our French-leaning wing:

And backwards and forwards, and backwards  
we went, and at last I was vexed,  
And swore I would never surrender a foot  
when the Russians charged next.

## XIX

"I know that life's worth keeping."—Ay, so  
it is, lad; so it is!—  
'But my life belongs to a woman.'—Does that  
mean Her Majesty, Miss?—<sup>110</sup>  
'These Russians came lumping and grinning:  
they're fierce at it, though they are blocks.  
Our fellows were pretty well pumped, and  
looked sharp for the little French cocks.  
Lord, didn't we pray for their crowing! when  
over us, on the hill-top,  
Behold the first line of them skipping, like  
kangaroos seen on the hop.

## XX

"That sent me into a passion, to think of  
them spying on my flight!"<sup>115</sup>  
Heigh, Tom! you've Bridgeman blood, boy!  
And, "Face them!" I shouted: "All  
right;  
Sure, Sergeant, we'll take their shot dacent,  
like gentlemen," Grady replied.  
A ball in his mouth, and the noble old Irish-  
man dropped by my side.  
Then there was just an instant to save myself,  
when a short wheeze  
Of bloody lungs under the smoke, and a red-  
coat crawled up on his knees.<sup>120</sup>

## XXI

"'Twas Ensign Baynes of our parish.'—Ah,  
ah, Miss Charlworth, the one  
Our Tom fought for a young lady? Come,  
now we've got into the fun!—  
'I shouldered him: he primed his pistol, and I  
trailed my musket, prepared.'  
Why, that's a fine pick-a-back for ye, to make  
twenty Russians look scared!  
'They came—never mind how many: we  
couldn't have run very well,<sup>125</sup>  
We fought back to back: "face to face, our  
last time!" he said, smiling, and fell.

## XXII

"Then I strove wild for his body: the beggars  
saw glittering rings,  
Which I vowed to send to his mother. I got  
some hard knocks and sharp stings,  
But felt them no more than angel, or devil, ex-  
cept in the wind.  
I know that I swore at a Russian for showing  
his teeth, and he grinned<sup>130</sup>  
The harder: quick, as from heaven, a man on  
a horse rode between,

And fired, and swung his bright saber: I can't  
write you more of the scene.

## XXIII

"But half in his arms, and half at his stirrup,  
he bore me right forth,  
And pitched me among my old comrades: be-  
fore I could tell south from north,  
He caught my hand up, and kissed it! Don't  
ever let any man speak<sup>135</sup>  
A word against Frenchmen, I near him! I  
can't find his name, though I seek.  
But French, and a General, surely he was,  
and, God bless him! through him  
I've learned to love a whole nation.'" The  
ancient man paused, winking dim.

## XXIV

A curious look, half woeful, was seen on his  
face as he turned  
His eyes upon each of his children, like one  
who but faintly discerned<sup>140</sup>  
His old self in an old mirror. Then gathering  
sense in his fist,  
He sounded it hard on his knee-cap. "Your  
hand, Tom, the French fellow kissed!  
He kissed my boy's old pounder! I say he's  
a gentleman!" Straight  
The letter he tossed to one daughter; bade  
her the remainder relate.

## XXV

Tom properly stated his praises in facts, but  
the lady preferred<sup>145</sup>  
To deck the narration with brackets, and drop  
her additional word.  
What nobler Christian natures these women  
could boast, who, 'twas known,  
Once spat at the name of their nephew, and  
now made his praises their own!  
The letter at last was finished, the hearers  
breathed freely, and sign  
Was given, "Tom's health!"—Quoth the  
farmer: "Eh, Miss? are you weak in the  
spine?"<sup>150</sup>

## XXVI

For Mary had sunk, and her body was shak-  
ing, as if in a fit.  
Tom's letter she held, and her thumb-nail the  
month when the letter was writ  
Fast-dinted, while she hung sobbing: "O, see,  
Sir, the letter is old!  
O, do not be too happy!"—"If I understand  
you, I'm bowled!"  
Said Grandfather Bridgeman, "and down go  
my wickets!—not happy! when here,<sup>155</sup>  
Here's Tom like to marry his General's daugh-  
ter—or widow—I'll swear!

## XXVII

"I wager he knows how to strut, too! It's all on the cards that the Queen will ask him to Buckingham Palace, to say what he's done and he's seen. Victoria's fond of her soldiers: and she's got a nose for a fight. If Tom tells a cleverish story—there is such a thing as a knight! 160 And don't he look roguish and handsome!—To see a girl sniveling there—By George, Miss, it's clear that you're jealous!"—"I love him!" she answered his stare.

## XXVIII

"Yes! now!" breathed the voice of a woman.—"Ah! now!" quivered low the reply. "And 'now' 's just a bit too late, so it's no use your piping your eye." The farmer added bluffly: "Old Lawyer Charleworth was rich; 165 You followed his instructions in kicking Tom into the ditch. If you're such a dutiful daughter, that doesn't prove Tom is a fool. Forgive and forget's my motto! and here's my grog growing cool!"

## XXIX

"But, sir," Mary faintly repeated: "for four long weeks I have failed To come and cast on you my burden; such grief for you always prevailed! 170 My heart has so bled for you!" The old man burst on her speech: "You've chosen a likely time, Miss! a pretty occasion to preach!" And was it not outrageous, that now, of all times, one should come With incomprehensible pity! Far better had Mary been dumb.

## XXX

But when again she stammered in this bewildering way, 175 The farmer no longer could bear it, and begged her to go, or to stay, But not to be whimpering nonsense at such a time. Pricked by a goad, "'Twas you who sent him to glory:—you've come here to reap what you sowed. Is that it?" he asked; and the silence the elders preserved plainly said, On Mary's heaving bosom this begging-petition was read. 180

## XXXI

And that it was scarcely a bargain that she who had driven him wild Should share now the fruits of his valor, the women expressed, as they smiled. The family pride of the Bridgemen was comforted; still, with contempt, They looked on a moneyed damsel of modesty quite so exempt. "O give me force to tell them!" cried Mary, and even as she spoke, 185 A shout and a hush of the children: a vision on all of them broke.

## XXXII

Wheeled, pale, in a chair, and shattered, the wreck of their hero was seen; The ghost of Tom drawn slow o'er the orchard's shadowy green. Could this be the martial darling they joyed in a moment ago? "He knows it?" to Mary Tom murmured, and closed his weak lids at her "No." 190 "Beloved!" she said, falling by him, "I have been a coward: I thought You lay in the foreign country, and some strange good might be wrought.

## XXXIII

"Each day I have come to tell him, and failed, with my hand on the gate. I bore the dreadful knowledge, and crushed my heart with its weight. The letter brought by your comrade—he has but just read it aloud! 195 It only reached him this morning!" Her head on his shoulder she bowed. Then Tom with pity's tenderest lordliness patted her arm, And eyed the old white-head fondly, with something of doubt and alarm.

## XXXIV

Oh, take to your fancy a sculptor whose fresh marble offspring appears Before him, shiningly perfect, the laurel-crowned issue of years: 200 Is heaven offended? for lightning behold from its bosom escape, And those are mocking fragments that made the harmonious shape! He cannot love the ruins, till, feeling that ruins alone Are left, he loves them threefold. So passed the old grandfather's moan.



## XXXV

John's text for a sermon on Slaughter he  
 heard, and he did not protest. 205  
 All rigid as April snowdrifts, he stood, hard  
 and feeble; his chest  
 Just showing the swell of the fire as it melted  
 him. Smiting a rib,  
 "Heigh! what have we been about, Tom!  
 Was this all a terrible fib?"  
 He cried, and the letter forth-trembled. Tom  
 told what the cannon had done.  
 Few present but ached to see falling those  
 aged tears on his heart's son! 210

## XXXVI

Up lanes of the quiet village, and where the  
 mill-waters rush red  
 Through browning summer meadows to catch  
 the sun's crimsoning head,  
 You meet an old man and a maiden who has  
 the soft ways of a wife  
 With one whom they wheel, alternate; whose  
 delicate flush of new life  
 Is prized like the early primrose. Then shake  
 his right hand, in the chair— 215  
 The old man fails never to tell you: "You've  
 got the French General's there!"

MODERN LOVE<sup>1</sup>

## I

By THIS he knew she wept with waking eyes:  
 That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,  
 The strange low sobs that shook their common  
 bed  
 Were called into her with a sharp surprise,  
 And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes, 5  
 Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay  
 Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed away  
 With muffled pulses. Then, as midnight  
 makes  
 Her giant heart of Memory and Tears  
 Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat 10  
 Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet  
 Were moveless, looking through their dead  
 black years,  
 By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.  
 Like sculptured effigies they might be seen  
 Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword be-  
 tween; 15  
 Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1862. The poem tells in fifty sections the tragic story of a husband and wife who loved each other once, but whose love has long been fading. "He" is the husband, "she" the wife.

## IV

All other joys of life he strove to warm,  
 And magnify, and catch them to his lip:  
 But they had suffered shipwreck with the ship,  
 And gazed upon him sallow from the storm. 20  
 Or if Delusion came, 'twas but to show  
 The coming minute mock the one that went.  
 Cold as a mountain in its star-pitched tent,  
 Stood high Philosophy, less friend than foe:  
 Whom self-caged Passion, from its prison-bars,  
 Is always watching with a wondering hate. 26  
 Not till the fire is dying in the grate,  
 Look we for any kinship with the stars.  
 Oh, wisdom never comes when it is gold,  
 And the great price we pay for it full worth: 30  
 We have it only when we are half earth.  
 Little avails that coinage to the old!

XIII<sup>2</sup>

"I play for Seasons; not Eternities!"  
 Says Nature, laughing on her way. "So must  
 All those whose stake is nothing more than  
 dust!" 35  
 And lo, she wins, and of her harmonies  
 She is full sure! Upon her dying rose  
 She drops a look of fondness, and goes by,  
 Scarce any retrospection in her eye;  
 For she the laws of growth most deeply knows,  
 Whose hands bear, here, a seed-bag—there,  
 an urn. 41  
 Pledged she herself to aught, 'twould mark her  
 end!

This lesson of our only visible friend  
 Can we not teach our foolish hearts to learn?  
 Yes! yes!—but, oh, our human rose is fair 45  
 Surpassingly! Lose calmly Love's great  
 bliss,  
 When the renewed for ever of a kiss  
 Whirls life within the shower of loosened hair!

## XVII

At dinner, she is hostess, I<sup>3</sup> am host.  
 Went the feast ever cheerfuller? She keeps 50  
 The Topic over intellectual deeps  
 In buoyancy afloat. They see no ghost.  
 With sparkling surface-eyes we ply the ball:  
 It is in truth a most contagious game:  
 HIDING THE SKELETON, shall be its name. 55  
 Such play as this the devils might appall!  
 But here's the greater wonder; in that we,  
 Enamored of an acting nought can tire,  
 Each other, like true hypocrites, admire;  
 Warm-lighted looks, Love's ephemeridæ, 60

<sup>2</sup>Here the husband speaks, saying that it is the law of Nature—and trying to persuade himself that it should be also the law for men—that everything should have its season and then pass away.

<sup>3</sup>The husband.

Shoot gaily o'er the dishes and the wine.  
We waken envy of our happy lot.  
Fast, sweet, and golden, shows the marriage-knot.

Dear guests, you now have seen Love's corpse-light shine.

## XIX

No state is enviable. To the luck alone 65  
Of some few favored men I would put claim.  
I bleed, but her who wounds I will not blame.  
Have I not felt her heart as 'twere my own  
Beat through me? could I hurt her? heaven  
and hell!

But I could hurt her cruelly! Can I let 70  
My Love's old time-piece to another set,  
Swear it can't stop, and must for ever swell?  
Sure, that's one way Love drifts into the mart  
Where goat-legged buyers throng. I see not  
plain:—

My meaning is, it must not be again. 75  
Great God! the maddest gambler throws his  
heart.

If any state be enviable on earth,  
'Tis yon born idiot's who, as days go by,  
Still rubs his hands before him, like a fly,  
In a queer sort of meditative mirth. 80

## XXIX

Am I failing? For no longer can I cast  
A glory round about this head of gold.<sup>1</sup>  
Glory she wears, but springing from the mold;  
Not like the consecration of the Past!  
Is my soul beggared? Something more than  
earth 85

I cry for still: I cannot be at peace  
In having Love upon a mortal lease.  
I cannot take the woman at her worth!  
Where is the ancient wealth wherewith I  
clothed

Our humankind nakedness, and could endow 90  
With spiritual splendor a white brow  
That else had grinned at me the fact I loathed?  
A kiss is but a kiss now! and no wave  
Of a great flood that whirls me to the sea.  
But, as you will! we'll sit contentedly, 95  
And eat our pot of honey on the grave.

## XXX

What are we first? First, animals; and next  
Intelligences at a leap; on whom  
Pale lies the distant shadow of the tomb,  
And all that draweth on the tomb for text. 100  
Into which state comes Love, the crowning  
sun:

Beneath whose light the shadow loses form.

<sup>1</sup>The husband has sought distraction from his wretchedness by philandering with a witty, golden-haired lady but, as this and the following section show, has found small satisfaction in it.

We are the lords of life, and life is warm.  
Intelligence and instinct now are one.  
But nature says: "My children most they  
seem 105

When they least know me: therefore I decree  
That they shall suffer." Swift doth young  
Love flee,

And we stand wakened, shivering from our  
dream.

Then if we study Nature we are wise.  
Thus do the few who live but with the day: 110  
The scientific animals are they.—  
Lady,<sup>2</sup> this is my sonnet to your eyes.

XLIII<sup>3</sup>

Mark where the pressing wind shoots javelin-  
like

Its skeleton shadow on the broad-backed  
wave!

Here is a fitting spot to dig Love's grave; 115  
Here where the ponderous breakers plunge  
and strike,

And dart their hissing tongues high up the  
sand:

In hearing of the ocean, and in sight  
Of those ribbed wind-streaks running into  
wave.

If I the death of Love had deeply planned, 120  
I never could have made it half so sure,  
As by the unblest kisses which upbraid  
The full-waked sense; or failing that, degrade!  
'Tis morning; but no morning can restore  
What we have forfeited. I see no sin: 125  
The wrong is mixed. In tragic life, God wot,  
No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:  
We are betrayed by what is false within.

XLVIII<sup>4</sup>

Their sense is with their senses all mixed in,  
Destroyed by subtleties these women are! 130  
More brain, O Lord, more brain! or we shall  
mar

Utterly this fair garden we might win.  
Behold! I looked for peace, and thought it  
near.

Our inmost hearts had opened, each to each.  
We drank the pure daylight of honest speech.

<sup>2</sup>The golden-haired lady. See preceding note.

<sup>3</sup>Husband and wife have agreed to forgive each other and to renew their love, but this they find impossible, and their kisses serve only to show them the death of love.

<sup>4</sup>Even after the discovery told in Section XLIII, the husband hoped that a real explanation and understanding between the two would bring about a settled, tolerable relationship. His wife, however, thinking that he loved the "Lady" and only pitied her, quixotically departed from him in order to leave him free to return to the "Lady." In Section XLIX he follows his wife and finds her by the sea. She dreams for a moment that their old love may re-awaken but, knowing in her heart that it cannot be, she commits suicide.

Alas! that was the fatal draught, I fear. 136  
 For when of my lost Lady came the word,  
 This woman, O this agony of flesh!  
 Jealous devotion bade her break the mesh,  
 That I might seek that other like a bird. 140  
 I do adore the nobleness! despise  
 The act! She has gone forth, I know not  
 where.  
 Will the hard world my sentence of her share?  
 I feel the truth; so let the world surmise.

L<sup>1</sup>

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat: 145  
 The union of this ever-diverse pair!  
 These two were rapid falcons in a snare,  
 Condemned to do the fitting of the bat.  
 Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,  
 They wandered once; clear as the dew on  
 flowers: 150  
 But they fed not on the advancing hours:  
 Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.  
 Then each applied to each that fatal knife,  
 Deep questioning, which probes to endless  
 dole.  
 Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul 155  
 When hot for certainties in this our life!—  
 In tragic hints here see what evermore  
 Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,  
 Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior  
 horse, 159  
 To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

### THE SPIRIT OF SHAKESPEARE<sup>2</sup>

THY greatest knew thee, Mother Earth; un-  
 soured  
 He knew thy sons. He probed from hell to  
 hell  
 Of human passions, but of love deflowered  
 His wisdom was not, for he knew thee well.  
 Thence came the honeyed corner at his lips, 5  
 The conquering smile wherein his spirit sails  
 Calm as the God who the white sea-wave  
 whips,<sup>3</sup>  
 Yet full of speech and intershifting tales,  
 Close mirrors of us: thence had he the laugh  
 We feel is thine: broad as ten thousand beeves  
 At pasture! thence thy songs, that winnow  
 chaff 11  
 From grain, bid sick Philosophy's last leaves  
 Whirl, if they have no response—they en-  
 forced  
 To fatten Earth when from her soul divorced.

## CONTINUED

How smiles he at a generation ranked  
 In gloomy noddings over life! They pass.  
 Not he to feed upon a breast unthanked,  
 Or eye a beauteous face in a cracked glass.  
 But he can spy that little twist of brain 5  
 Which moved some weighty leader of the  
 blind,  
 Unwitting 'twas the goad of personal pain,  
 To view in curst eclipse our Mother's mind,  
 And show us of some rigid harridan  
 The wretched bondmen till the end of time. 10  
 O lived the Master now to paint us Man,  
 That little twist of brain would ring a chime  
 Of whence it came and what it caused, to start  
 Thunders of laughter, clearing air and heart.

### EARTH'S SECRET<sup>4</sup>

Not solitarily in fields we find  
 Earth's secret open, though one page is there;  
 Her plainest, such as children spell, and share  
 With bird and beast; raised letters for the  
 blind.  
 Not where the troubled passions toss the mind,  
 In turbid cities, can the key be bare. 6  
 It hangs for those who hither thither fare,  
 Close interthreading nature with our kind.  
 They, hearing History speak, of what men  
 were,  
 And have become, are wise. The gain is great  
 In vision and solidity; it lives. 11  
 Yet at a thought of life apart from her,  
 Solidity and vision lose their state,  
 For Earth, that gives the milk, the spirit gives.

### THE DISCIPLINE OF WISDOM

RICH labor is the struggle to be wise,  
 While we make sure the struggle cannot cease.  
 Else better were it in some bower of peace  
 Slothful to swing, contending with the flies.  
 You point at Wisdom fixed on lofty skies, 5  
 As mid barbarian hordes a sculptured Greece:  
 She falls. To live and shine, she grows her  
 fleece,  
 Is shorn, and rubs with follies and with lies.  
 So following her, your hewing may attain  
 The right to speak unto the mute, and shun 10  
 That sly temptation of the illumined brain,  
 Deliveries oracular, self-spun.  
 Who sweats not with the flock will seek in  
 vain.  
 To shed the words which are ripe fruit of sun.

<sup>1</sup>In this section the poet speaks in his own person.<sup>2</sup>Published in 1883.<sup>3</sup>Neptune.<sup>4</sup>This and the following sonnet were published in 1883.



THE LARK ASCENDING<sup>1</sup>

HE RISES and begins to round,  
 He drops the silver chain of sound,  
 Of many links without a break,  
 In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake,  
 All interwolved and spreading wide,  
 Like water-dimples down a tide  
 Where ripple ripple overcurls  
 And eddy into eddy whirls;  
 A press of hurried notes that run  
 So fleet they scarce are more than one,  
 Yet changingly the trills repeat  
 And linger ringing while they fleet,  
 Sweet to the quick o' the ear, and dear  
 To her beyond the handmaid ear,  
 Who sits beside our inner springs,  
 Too often dry for this he brings,  
 Which seems the very jet of earth  
 At sight of sun, her music's mirth,  
 As up he wings the spiral stair,  
 A song of light, and pierces air  
 With fountain ardor, fountain play,  
 To reach the shining tops of day,  
 And drink in everything discerned  
 An ecstasy to music turned,  
 Impelled by what his happy bill  
 Disperses; drinking, showering still,  
 Unthinking save that he may give  
 His voice the outlet, there to live  
 Renewed in endless notes of glee,  
 So thirsty of his voice is he,  
 For all to hear and all to know  
 That he is joy, awake, aglow,  
 The tumult of the heart to hear  
 Through pureness filtered crystal-clear,  
 And know the pleasure sprinkled bright  
 By simple singing of delight,  
 Shrill, irreflective, unrestrained,  
 Rapt, ringing, on the jet sustained  
 Without a break, without a fall,  
 Sweet-silvery, sheer lyrical,  
 Perennial, quavering up the chord  
 Like myriad dews of sunny sward  
 That trembling into fullness shine,  
 And sparkle dropping argentine;<sup>2</sup>  
 Such wooing as the ear receives  
 From zephyr caught in choric leaves  
 Of aspens when their chattering net  
 Is flushed to white with shivers wet;  
 And such the water-spirit's chime  
 On mountain heights in morning's prime,  
 Too freshly sweet to seem excess,  
 Too animate to need a stress;  
 But wider over many heads  
 The starry voice ascending spreads,  
 Awakening, as it waxes thin,  
 The best in us to him akin;  
 And every face to watch him raised

Puts on the light of children praised,  
 So rich our human pleasure ripens  
 When sweetness on sincereness pipes,  
 Though nought be promised from the seas,  
 But only a soft-ruffling breeze  
 Sweep glittering on a still content,  
 Serenity in ravishment.

For singing till his heaven fills,  
 'Tis love of earth that he instills,  
 And ever winging up and up,  
 Our valley is his golden cup,  
 And he the wine which overflows  
 To lift us with him as he goes:  
 The woods and brooks, the sheep and kine,  
 He is, the hills, the human line,  
 The meadows green, the fallows brown,  
 The dreams of labor in the town;  
 He sings the sap, the quickened veins;  
 The wedding song of sun and rains  
 He is, the dance of children, thanks  
 Of sowers, shout of primrose-banks,  
 And eye of violets while they breathe;  
 All these the circling song will wreath,  
 And you shall hear the herb and tree,  
 The better heart of men shall see,  
 Shall feel celestially, as long  
 As you crave nothing save the song.

Was never voice of ours could say  
 Our inmost in the sweetest way,  
 Like yonder voice aloft, and link  
 All hearers in the song they drink.  
 Our wisdom speaks from failing blood,  
 Our passion is too full in flood,  
 We want the key of his wild note  
 Of truthful in a tuneful throat,  
 The song seraphically free  
 Of taint of personality,  
 So pure that it salutes the suns,  
 The voice of one for millions,  
 In whom the millions rejoice  
 For giving their one spirit voice.

Yet men have we, whom we revere,  
 Now names, and men still housing here,  
 Whose lives, by many a battle-dint  
 Defaced, and grinding wheels on flint,  
 Yield substance, though they sing not, sweet  
 For song our highest heaven to greet:  
 Whom heavenly singing gives us new,  
 Ensppheres them brilliant in our blue,  
 From firmest base to farthest leap,  
 Because their love of Earth is deep,  
 And they are warriors in accord  
 With life to serve, and pass reward,  
 So touching purest and so heard  
 In the brain's reflex of yon bird:  
 Wherefore their soul in me, or mine,  
 Through self-forgetfulness divine,

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1881.<sup>2</sup>Silvery substance.

In them, that song aloft maintains, 115  
 To fill the sky and thrill the plains  
 With showerings drawn from human stores,  
 As he to silence nearer soars,  
 Extends the world at wings and dome,  
 More spacious making more our home, 120  
 Till lost on his aerial rings  
 In light, and then the fancy sings.

## LOVE IN THE VALLEY<sup>1</sup>

UNDER yonder beech-tree single on the green-  
 sward,  
 Couched with her arms behind her golden  
 head,  
 Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,  
 Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.  
 Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her, 5  
 Press her parting lips as her waist I gather  
 slow,  
 Waking in amazement she could not but em-  
 brace me:  
 Then would she hold me and never let me  
 go?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swal-  
 low,  
 Swift as the swallow along the river's light  
 Circleting the surface to meet his mirrored  
 winglets, 11  
 Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her  
 flight.  
 Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-  
 tops,  
 Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of  
 sun,  
 She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,  
 Hard, but O the glory of the winning were  
 she won! 16

When her mother tends her before the laugh-  
 ing mirror,  
 Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,  
 Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,  
 More love should I have, and much less care.  
 When her mother tends her before the lighted  
 mirror, 21  
 Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,  
 Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,  
 I should miss but one for many boys and  
 girls.

Heartless she is as the shadow in the meadows  
 Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy  
 noon. 26

No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:  
 Earth to her is young as the slip of the new  
 moon.  
 Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid  
 measure,  
 Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal  
 no less: 30  
 Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the  
 flowers with hailstones  
 Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise  
 and bless.

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweep-  
 ing  
 Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.  
 Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note un-  
 varied, 35  
 Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown  
 eve-jar.<sup>2</sup>  
 Darker grows the valley, more and more  
 forgetting:  
 So were it with me if forgetting could be  
 willed.  
 Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling  
 well-spring,  
 Tell it to forget the source that keeps it filled.

Stepping down the hill with her fair compan-  
 ions, 41  
 Arm in arm, all against the raying West,  
 Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she  
 marches,  
 Brave in her shape, and sweeter unpos-  
 sessed.  
 Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awaking  
 Whispered the world was; morning light is  
 she. 46  
 Love that so desires would fain keep her  
 changeless;  
 Fain would fling the net, and fain have her  
 free.

Happy happy time, when the white star hovers  
 Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy dew,  
 Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart  
 the darkness, 51  
 Threading it with color, like yewberries the  
 yew.  
 Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East  
 deepens  
 Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud  
 swells.  
 Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is,  
 and secret; 55  
 Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as  
 cold sea-shells.

<sup>1</sup>Published in 1851, but rewritten and enlarged before  
 republication in 1878.

<sup>2</sup>Night-jar, the European species of goatsucker.

Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and  
lighting  
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills  
along,  
Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant  
laughter  
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song. 60  
Ay, but shows the South-West a ripple-  
feathered bosom  
Blown to silver while the clouds are shaken  
and ascend  
Scaling the mid-heavens as they stream,  
there comes a sunset  
Rich, deep like love in beauty without end.

When at dawn she sighs, and like an infant to  
the window 65  
Turns grave eyes craving light, released  
from dreams,  
Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily  
Bursting out of bud in havens of the  
streams.  
When from bed she rises clothed from neck  
to ankle  
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of  
May, 70  
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden lily  
Pure from the night, and splendid for the  
day.

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed twilight,  
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,  
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-  
delighted skylark, 75  
Clear as though the dewdrops had their  
voice in him.  
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the rayless  
planet,  
Fountain-full he pours the spraying  
fountain-showers.  
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her  
ever  
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the  
flowers. 80

All the girls are out with their baskets for the  
primrose;  
Up lanes, woods through, they troop in  
joyful bands.  
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now  
she loiters,  
Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs her  
hands.  
Such a look will tell that the violets are  
peeping, 85  
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry

Springs in her bosom for odors and for color,  
Covert and the nightingale; she knows not  
why.

Kerchiefed head and chin she darts between  
her tulips,  
Streaming like a willow gray in arrowy  
rain:  
Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their  
angel 91  
She will be; she lifts them, and on she speeds  
again.  
Black the driving raincloud breasts the iron  
gateway:  
She is forth to cheer a neighbor lacking  
mirth.  
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for  
thunder 95  
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.

Prim little scholars are the flowers of her  
garden,  
Trained to stand in rows, and asking if they  
please.  
I might love them well but for loving more the  
wild ones:  
O my wild ones! they tell me more than  
these. 100  
You, my wild one, you tell of honeyed field-  
rose,  
Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even  
as they,  
They by the wayside are earnest of your  
goodness,  
You are of life's, on the banks that line the  
way.

Peering at her chamber the white crowns the  
red rose, 105  
Jasmine winds the porch with stars two and  
three.  
Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry  
jasmine  
Breathes a falling breath that carries  
thoughts of me.  
Sweeter unpossessed, have I said of her my  
sweetest?  
Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the  
jasmine breathes, 110  
Luring her to love; she sleeps; the starry jas-  
mine  
Bears me to her pillow under white rose-  
wreaths.

Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-  
glades;  
Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray leaf;



Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are  
yellow; 115  
Blue-necked the wheat sways, yellowing to  
the sheaf.  
Green-yellow bursts from the copse the laugh-  
ing yaffle;<sup>1</sup>  
Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and  
shine:  
Earth in her heart laughs looking at the  
heavens,  
Thinking of the harvest: I look and think of  
mine. 120

This I may know: her dressing and undressing  
Such a change of light shows as when the  
skies in sport  
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over  
thunder  
Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into port  
White sails furl; or on the ocean borders 125  
White sails lean along the waves leaping  
green.  
Visions of her shower before me, but from  
eyesight  
Guarded she would be like the sun were she  
seen.

Front door and back of the mossed old farm-  
house  
Open with the morn, and in a breezy link  
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadowed  
orchard, 131  
Green across a rill where on sand the min-  
nows wink.  
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer  
Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting  
notes  
Call my darling up with round and roguish  
challenge: 135  
Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing  
throats!

Cool was the woodside; cool as her white dairy  
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there the  
boys from school,  
Cricketing below, rushed brown and red with  
sunshine;  
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed  
cool! 140  
Spying from the farm, herself she fetched a  
pitcher  
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the  
beak.  
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tiptoe,  
Said, "I will kiss you": she laughed and  
leaned her cheek. 144

Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red roof  
Through the long noon coo, crooning  
through the coo.  
Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy  
roadway  
Sometimes pipes a chaffinch; loose droops  
the blue. 148  
Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,  
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and fly.  
Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her nowhere,  
Lightning may come, straight rains and  
tiger sky.

O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-  
armful!  
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!  
O the treasure-tresses one another over 155  
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the  
waist!  
Slain are the poppies that shot their random  
scarlet  
Quick amid the wheatears: wound about the  
waist,  
Gathered, see these brides of Earth one blush  
of ripeness! 155  
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,  
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded  
snow:  
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of  
moonrise,  
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.  
Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-  
tree 165  
Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.  
Here may life on death or death on life be  
painted.  
Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!

Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow  
chamber  
Where there is no window, read not heaven  
or her. 170  
"When she was a tiny," one aged woman  
quavers,  
Plucks at my heart and leads me by the ear.  
Faults she had once as she learned to run and  
tumbled:  
Faults of feature some see, beauty not  
complete.  
Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy 175  
Earth and air, may have faults from head to  
feet.

<sup>1</sup>The green woodpecker.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she lingers,  
Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new  
surprise

High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;  
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes. 180  
Something friends have told her fills her heart  
to brimming,

Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her,  
and tames.—

Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,  
Arms up, she dropped: our souls were in our  
names. 184

Soon will she lie like a white-frost sunrise.  
Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale as  
rye,

Long since your sheaves have yielded to the  
thresher,

Felt the girdle loosened, seen the tresses fly.

Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.

Swift with the to-morrow, green-winged  
Spring! 190

Sing from the South-West, bring her back the  
truants,

Nightingale and swallow, song and dipping  
wing.

Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April  
Spreading bough on bough a primrose  
mountain, you, 194

Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the skyfields,  
Youngest green transfused in silver shining  
through:

Fairer than the lily, than the wild white  
cherry:

Fair as in image my seraph love appears

Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my  
eyelids: 199

Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on tears.

Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,  
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my  
need.

Every woodland tree is flushing like the dog-  
wood,

Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like  
the reed. 204

Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;  
Streaming like the flag-reed South-West  
blown;

Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted white-  
beam:

All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

## HARD WEATHER<sup>1</sup>

BURSTS from a rending East in flaws  
The young green leaflet's harrier, sworn

To strew the garden, strip the shaws,<sup>2</sup>  
And show our Spring with banner torn.  
Was ever such virago morn? 5

The wind has teeth, the wind has claws.  
All the wind's wolves through woods are loose,  
The wild wind's falconry aloft.

Shrill underfoot the grassblade shrews,  
At gallop, clumped, and down the croft 10  
Bestrid by shadows, beaten, tossed;  
It seems a scythe, it seems a rod.  
The howl is up at the howl's accost;  
The shivers greet and the shivers nod.

Is the land ship? we are rolled, we drive 15  
Tritonly, cleaving hiss and hum;

Whirl with the dead, or mount or dive,  
Or down in dregs, or on in scum.

And drums the distant, pipes the near,  
And vale and hill are gray in gray, 20

As when the surge is crumbling sheer,  
And sea-mews wing the haze of spray.

Clouds—are they bony witches?—swarms,  
Darting swift on the robber's flight,

Hurry an infant sky in arms: 25  
It peeps, it beck; 'tis day, 'tis night.

Black while over the loop of blue  
The swathe is closed, like shroud on corse.

Lo, as if swift the Furies flew,  
The Fates at heel at a cry to horse! 30

Interpret me the savage whirr:  
And is it Nature scourged, or she,

Her offspring's executioner,  
Reducing land to barren sea?

But is there meaning in a day  
When this fierce angel of the air, 35

Intent to throw, and haply slay,  
Can for what breath of life we bear

Exact the wrestle? Call to mind  
The many meanings glistening up 40

When Nature, to her nurslings kind,  
Hands them the fruitage and the cup!

And seek we rich significance  
Not elsewhere than with those tides

Of pleasure on the sunned expanse, 45  
Whose flow deludes, whose ebb derides?

Look in the face of men who fare  
Lock-mouthed, a match in lungs and thews

For this fierce angel of the air,  
To twist with him and take his bruise. 50

That is the face beloved of old  
Of Earth, young mother of her brood:

Nor broken for us shows the mold  
When muscle is in mind renewed:

Though farther from her nature rude, 55  
Yet nearer to her spirit's hold:

And though of gentler mood serene,  
Still forceful of her fountain-jet.

<sup>1</sup>This and the two following poems were published in 1888.

<sup>2</sup>Woods.

So shall her blows be shrewdly met,  
 Be luminously read the scene 60  
 Where Life is at her grindstone set,  
 That she may give us edging keen,  
 String us for battle, till as play  
 The common strokes of fortune shower.  
 Such meaning in a dagger-day 65  
 Our wits may clasp to wax in power.  
 Yea, feel us warmer at her breast,  
 By spin of blood in lusty drill,  
 Than when her honeyed hands caressed,  
 And Pleasure, sapping, seemed to fill. 70

Behold the life at ease; it drifts.  
 The sharpened life commands its course.  
 She winnows, winnows roughly; sifts,  
 To dip her chosen in her source:  
 Contention is the vital force, 75  
 Whence pluck they brain, her prize of gifts,  
 Sky of the senses! on which height,  
 Not disconnected, yet released,  
 They see how spirit comes to light,  
 Through conquest of the inner beast, 80  
 Which Measure tames to movement sane,  
 In harmony with what is fair.  
 Never is Earth misread by brain:  
 That is the welling of her, there  
 The mirror: with one step beyond, 85  
 For likewise is it voice; and more,  
 Benignest kinship bids respond,  
 When wail the weak, and them restore  
 Whom days as fell as this may rive,  
 While Earth sits ebon in her gloom, 90  
 Us atomies of life alive  
 Unheeding, bent on life to come.  
 Her children of the laboring brain,  
 These are the champions of the race,  
 True parents, and the sole humane, 95  
 With understanding for their base.  
 Earth yields the milk, but all her mind  
 Is vowed to thresh for stouter stock.  
 Her passion for old giantkind,  
 That scaled the mount, uphurled the rock,  
 Devolves on them who read aright 101  
 Her meaning and devoutly serve;  
 Nor in her starlessness of night  
 Peruse her with the craven nerve:  
 But even as she from grass to corn, 105  
 To eagle high from grubbing mole,  
 Prove in strong brain her noblest born,  
 The station for the flight of soul.

## EARTH AND A WEDDED WOMAN

### I

THE shepherd, with his eye on hazy South,  
 Has told of rain upon the fall of day,

But promise is there none for Susan's drouth.  
 That he will come, who keeps in dry delay.  
 The freshest of the village three years gone, 5  
 She hangs as the white field-rose hangs short-  
 lived;

And she and Earth are one  
 In withering unrevived.  
 Rain! O the glad refresher of the grain! 9  
 And welcome waterspouts, had we sweet rain!

### II

Ah, what is Marriage, says each pouting maid,  
 When she who wedded with the soldier hides  
 At home as good as widowed in the shade,  
 A lighthouse to the girls that would be brides:  
 Nor dares to give a lad an ogle, nor 15  
 To dream of dancing, but must hang and moan,  
 Her husband in the war,  
 And she to lie alone.

Rain! O the glad refresher of the grain! 19  
 And welcome waterspouts, had we sweet rain!

### III

They have not known; they are not in the  
 stream;  
 Light as the flying seed-ball is their play,  
 The silly maids! and happy souls they seem;  
 Yet Grief would not change fates with such 15  
 as they.  
 They have not struck the roots which meet the  
 fires 25  
 Beneath, and bind us fast with Earth, to know  
 The strength of her desires,  
 The sternness of her woe.

Rain! O the glad refresher of the grain! 29  
 And welcome waterspouts, had we sweet rain!

### IV

Now, shepherd, see thy word, where without  
 shower  
 A borderless low blotting Westward spreads.  
 The hall-clock holds the valley on the hour;  
 Across an inner chamber thunder treads:  
 The dead leaf trips, the tree-top swings, the 35  
 floor  
 Of dust whirls, dropping lumped: near thunder  
 speaks,

And drives the dames to door,  
 Their kerchiefs flapped at cheeks.  
 Rain! O the glad refresher of the grain!  
 And welcome waterspouts of blessed rain! 40

### V

Through night, with bedroom window wide  
 for air,  
 Lay Susan tranced to hear all heaven descend:  
 And gurgling voices came of Earth, and rare,  
 Past flowerful, breathings, deeper than life's  
 end,



From her heaved breast of sacred common  
mold; 45  
Whereby this lone-laid wife was moved to feel  
Unworded things and old  
To her pained heart appeal.  
Rain! O the glad refresher of the grain!  
And down in deluges of blessed rain! 50

## VI

At morn she stood to live for ear and sight,  
Love sky or cloud, or rose or grasses drenched.  
A lureful devil, that in glow-worm light  
Set languor writhing all its folds, she quenched.  
But she would muse when neighbors praised  
her face, 55  
Her services, and staunchness to her mate:  
Knowing by some dim trace,  
The change might bear a date.  
Rain! O the glad refresher of the grain!  
Thrice beauteous is our sunshine after rain! 60

MEDITATION UNDER  
STARS

WHAT links are ours with orbs that are  
So resolutely far:  
The solitary asks, and they  
Give radiance as from a shield:  
Still at the death of day, 5  
The seen, the unrevealed.  
Implacable they shine  
To us who would of Life obtain  
An answer for the life we strain  
To nourish with one sign. 10  
Nor can imagination throw  
The penetrative shaft: we pass  
The breath of thought, who would divine  
If haply they may grow  
As Earth; have our desire to know; 15  
If life comes there to grain from grass,  
And flowers like ours of toil and pain;  
Has passion to beat bar,  
Win space from cleaving brain;  
The mystic link attain, 20  
Whereby star holds on star.

Those visible immortals beam  
Allurement to the dream:  
Ireful at human hungers brook  
No question in the look. 25  
For ever virgin to our sense,  
Remote they wane to gaze intense:  
Prolong it, and in ruthlessness they smite  
The beating heart behind the ball of sight:  
Till we conceive their heavens hoar, 30  
Those lights they raise but sparkles froze,  
And Earth, our blood-warm Earth, a shud-  
dering prey  
To that frigidity of brainless ray.

Yet space is given for breath of thought  
Beyond our bounds when musing: more 35  
When to that musing love is brought,  
And love is asked of love's wherefore.  
'Tis Earth's, her gift; else have we nought:  
Her gift, her secret, here our tie.  
And not with her and yonder sky? 40  
Bethink you: were it Earth alone  
Breeds love, would not her region be  
The sole delight and throne  
Of generous Deity?

To deeper than this ball of sight 45  
Appeal the lustrous people of the night.  
Fronting yon shoreless, sown with fiery sails,  
It is our ravenous that quails,  
Flesh by its craven thirsts and fears dis-  
traught.

The spirit leaps alight, 50  
Doubts not in them is he,  
The binder of his sheaves, the sane, the right:  
Of magnitude to magnitude is wrought,  
To feel it large of the great life they hold:  
In them to come, or vaster interwolved, 55  
The issues known in us, our unsolved solved:  
That there with toil Life climbs the selfsame  
Tree,  
Whose roots enrichment have from ripeness  
dropped.  
So may we read and little find them cold:  
Let it but be the lord of Mind to guide 60  
Our eyes; no branch of Reason's growing  
lopped;  
Nor dreaming on a dream; but fortified  
By day to penetrate black midnight; see,  
Hear, feel, outside the senses; even that we,  
The specks of dust upon a mound of mold, 65  
We who reflect those rays, though low our  
place,  
To them are lastingly allied.

So may we read, and little find them cold:  
Not frosty lamps illumining dead space,  
Not distant aliens, not senseless Powers. 70  
The fire is in them whereof we are born;  
The music of their motion may be ours.  
Spirit shall deem them beckoning Earth and  
voiced  
Sisterly to her, in her beams rejoiced.  
Of love, the grand impulsion, we behold 75  
The love that lends her grace  
Among the starry fold.  
Then at new flood of customary morn,  
Look at her through her showers,  
Her mists, her streaming gold, 80  
A wonder edges the familiar face:  
She wears no more that robe of printed hours;  
Half strange seems Earth, and sweeter than  
her flowers.

## FRANCIS THOMPSON (1859-1907)

Thompson was born at Preston on 18 December, 1859. His parents were converts to the Roman Catholic Church, and the boy was sent in 1870 to Ushaw College to receive a classical education—a first step towards preparation for the priesthood. He was studious, and devoted to the Church; but was also frail, shy, and wayward. When he was seventeen his father deemed it best for him to undertake the study of medicine (he himself was a homeopathic physician), and sent him to Owens College, Manchester, for that purpose. Thompson went, but disliked medical study, and apparently made little effort to succeed. He read much, especially in Blake, Æschylus, and DeQuincey, but at the end of six years had failed three times to pass his examinations for a medical degree. Reproaches not unnaturally followed, and might, with any one less completely unfitted for the world than Thompson, have led to a declaration for a literary career and to some measure of understanding. He, however, simply turned away from his family, and sought the nearest way to independence in whatever humble employment he could find. In November, 1885, he went to London, and there drifted to the lowest conceivable stage of poverty—aided in his course by laudanum, to which he had fallen a victim when attacked by neuralgia. For a time he was reduced to sleeping in the open, to earning a few pennies by selling matches or by fetching cabs, to receiving aid (as had DeQuincey) from a girl of the street who pitied him, and to securing paper from a charitable bootmaker whereon he might try to compose a poem or two. In 1888 he sent two poems and an essay to *Merry*

*England*, a periodical edited by Wilfrid Meynell. They were accepted and published; and thus began—not without difficulties arising from Thompson's elusiveness and utterly disorganized way of life—a relationship which changed the face of the world for Thompson, and made possible all of his later work. Laudanum and poverty had wrecked his health; but Wilfrid Meynell and his wife, Alice, cared for him sympathetically, restored him in strength, brought his opium eating under control, encouraged him to write, and, generally, made themselves his good angels. During the 1890's he published three volumes of verse (*Poems*, 1893; *Sister Songs*, 1895; and *New Poems*, 1897), and during the remainder of his life he wrote much for the critical reviews. He died from tuberculosis on 13 November, 1907. From the beginning he had enthusiastic admirers, and the fineness of his poetic gift is now everywhere recognized. Of *The Hound of Heaven* no less than 50,000 copies were sold during the three years following his death. Of his prose essay, *Shelley* (posthumously published, 1909, though written twenty years earlier), George Wyndham wrote: "It is the most important contribution to pure letters written in English during the last twenty years." Despite difficulties which he gives his readers, despite his involved language and strange words, his willfulness, his seeming remoteness, his subtle and sometimes confused thought, Thompson's poetry is likely to live, because it answers finely to a deep and perennial need. "To be the poet of the return to Nature," he wrote, "is somewhat; but I would be the poet of the return to God."

### THE HOUND OF HEAVEN<sup>1</sup>

I FLED Him, down the nights and down the days;  
 I fled Him, down the arches of the years;  
 I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways  
 Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears  
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter.  
     Up vistaed hopes, I sped;  
     And shot, precipitated,  
 Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,  
 From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.  
     But with unhurrying chase,  
     And unperturbèd pace,

Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
     They beat—and a Voice beat  
     More instant than the Feet:  
 "All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."  
  
 I pleaded, outlaw-wise,  
 By many a hearted casement, curtained red,  
     Trellised with intertwining charities;  
 (For, though I knew His love Who followèd,  
     Yet was I sore adread  
 Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside).  
 But, if one little casement parted wide,  
     The gust of His approach would clash it to.  
 Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to  
     pursue.  
 Across the margin of the world I fled,

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1889 or 1890; published in *Poems*, 1893.

And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,  
 Smiting for shelter on their clanged bars;  
 Fretted to dulcet jars  
 And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.  
 I said to Dawn, Be sudden—to Eve, Be soon:  
 With thy young skyey blossoms heap me  
 over 31

From this tremendous Lover—  
 Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!  
 I tempted all His servitors, but to find  
 My own betrayal in their constancy, 35  
 In faith to Him their fickleness to me,  
 Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal  
 deceit.

To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;  
 Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.  
 But whether they swept, smoothly  
 fleet, 40

The long savannahs of the blue;  
 Or whether, thunder-driven,  
 They clanged His chariot 'thwart a  
 heaven

Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn  
 o' their feet:

Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to  
 pursue. 45

Still with unhurrying chase,  
 And unperturbèd pace,  
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
 Came on the following Feet,  
 And a Voice above their beat: 50

"Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter  
 Me."

I sought no more that after which I strayed  
 In face of man or maid;

But still within the little children's eyes  
 Seems something, something that replies,  
*They* at least are for me, surely for me! 56

I turned me to them very wistfully;  
 But just as their young eyes grew sudden fair  
 With dawning answers there,

Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.  
 "Come then, ye other children, Nature's,—  
 share 61

With me" (said I) "your delicate fellowship;  
 Let me greet you lip to lip,  
 Let me twine with you caresses,  
 Wantoning 65

With our Lady-Mother's<sup>1</sup> vagrant tresses;  
 Banqueting

With her in her wind-walled palace,  
 Underneath her azured dais;

Quaffing, as your taintless way is, 70  
 From a chalice

Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."  
 So it was done:

*I* in their delicate fellowship was one—

Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies. 75

*I* knew all the swift importings  
 On the willful face of skies;  
 I knew how the clouds arise  
 Spumed of the wild sea-snortings—

All that's born or dies, 80  
 Rose and drooped with; made them  
 shapers

Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine;  
 With them joyed and was bereaven.

I was heavy with the even,  
 When she lit her glimmering tapers 85  
 Round the day's dead sanctities;

I laughed in the morning's eyes.  
 I triumphed and I saddened with all weather:

Heaven and I wept together,  
 And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;

Against the red throb of its sunset-heart 91  
 I laid my own to beat,

And share commingling heat.  
 But not by that, by that, was eased my human  
 smart;

In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's gray  
 cheek. 95

For ah! we know not what each other says,  
 These things and I: in sound *I* speak—

*Their* sound is but their stir, they speak by  
 silences.

Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my  
 drouth;

Let her, if she would owe<sup>2</sup> me, 100  
 Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me  
 The breasts o' her tenderness:

Never did any milk of hers once bless  
 My thirsting mouth.

Nigh and nigh draws the chase, 105  
 With unperturbèd pace,  
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
 And past those noised Feet

A Voice comes yet more fleet—  
 "Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st not  
 Me." 110

Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!  
 My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn  
 from me,

And smitten me to my knee:  
 I am defenseless utterly.

I slept, methinks, and woke, 115  
 And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.  
 In the rash lustihead of my young powers,  
 I shook the pillaring hours

And pulled my life upon me;<sup>3</sup> grimed with  
 smears, 119

I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years—  
 My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.  
 My days have crackled and gone up in smoke,

<sup>2</sup>Own.

<sup>3</sup>In allusion to Samson (Judges, xvi, 29-30).

<sup>1</sup>*I.e.*, Nature's.



Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a stream.

Yea, faileth now even dream  
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist; 125  
Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy twist

I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,  
Are yielding—cords of all too weak account  
For earth, with heavy griefs so overplussed.

Ah! is Thy love indeed 130  
A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,  
Suffering no flowers except its own to mount?

Ah! must—  
Designer infinite!—  
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst  
limn with it? 135  
My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the dust;

And now my heart is as a broken fount,  
Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down ever

From the dank thoughts that shiver  
Upon the sighful branches of my mind. 140  
Such is: what is to be?

The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?  
I dimly guess what Time in mist confounds;  
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds  
From the hid battlements of Eternity: 145  
Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then  
Round the half-glimpsed turrets slowly wash again.

But not ere him who summoneth  
I first have seen, enwound  
With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-crowned: 150

His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.  
Whether man's heart or life it be which yields  
Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields  
Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit 155  
Comes on at hand the bruit;  
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea:  
"And is thy earth so marred,  
Shattered in shard on shard?  
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me! 160  
Strange, piteous, futile thing!  
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?  
Seeing none but I makes much of naught"  
(He said),

"And human love needs human meriting:  
How hast thou merited— 165  
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?  
Alack, thou knowest not  
How little worthy of any love thou art!  
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,  
Save Me, save only Me? 170  
All which I took from thee I did but take,  
Not for thy harms,  
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.  
All which thy child's mistake  
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:  
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!" 176

Halts by me that footfall:  
Is my gloom, after all,  
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?—  
"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest, 180  
I am He Whom thou seekest!  
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

## ROBERT BRIDGES (1844-1930)

Robert Seymour Bridges was born on 23 October, 1844. He was educated at Eton and at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He then studied medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, and was afterwards a physician at this and other London hospitals, but retired from the practice of medicine in 1882. Poetry, indeed, was the art for which he was born, and he was fortunately able to give himself over to its study and practice. His earliest poems long ago excited the admiration of a few readers, who lamented that they were practically unobtainable, existing only in privately printed editions. When later, however, these and other poems were regularly published they did not immediately win for themselves a large public. The reason for this is not far to seek. There is little or nothing that is obviously contemporary in Bridges' poetry, either in its style or in its content, nor does it have any sensational elements susceptible of cheap exploitation. Moreover, even in his lyrics, by general consent Bridges' most successful poems, deep or strong feeling is not so evident as fineness of feeling and carefully restrained expression—qualities which do not make for immediate and widely popular response. Bridges was, in fact, a learned and painstaking artist, consciously writing in the great tradition of English verse, and caring for no meaner reward than the consciousness of work done as well as might be. As a consequence, being greatly gifted, he became

unquestionably the most faultless artist among recent English poets, standing preëminent for his classic grace, for perfect unity of form and content, for his mastery of delicate harmony, and for a simplicity of thought and expression which is itself the last word in deliberate art. His achievement was given official recognition when he was in 1913 appointed Poet Laureate. In his later years, though he continued to write poetry to the end, he became more and more interested in criticism, in prosodical theory, and in questions connected with the English language—the preservation of its purity, the reform of spelling, and the improvement of handwriting. He was instrumental in founding the Society for Pure English (1913), and made valuable contributions to its series of tracts. In the spring of 1924 he visited the United States, delivering lectures at the University of Michigan and receiving honorary degrees from that institution and from Harvard. On his eighty-fifth birthday (1929) he published a meditative poem in four books (4374 lines), entitled *The Testament of Beauty*. There was a sharp division of critical opinion concerning this extraordinary poem; and it can only be said at present that, while its experimental form certainly does not justify itself, still, the poem is remarkable for many noble and weighty passages containing the final conclusions of a richly stored and well balanced mind. After a short illness, Bridges died on 21 April, 1930.

### THE GROWTH OF LOVE<sup>1</sup>

#### XVII

SAY who be these light-bearded, sunburnt  
faces

In negligent and travel-stained array,  
That in the city of Dante come to-day,  
Haughtily visiting her holy places?  
O these be noble men that hide their graces, 5  
True England's blood, her ancient glory's stay,  
By tales of fame diverted on their way  
Home from the rule of oriental races.

Life-trifling lions these, of gentle eyes  
And motion delicate, but swift to fire 10

<sup>1</sup>The following poems are reprinted with the permission of the late Dr. Bridges and of Mr. John Murray.

The earliest edition of *The Growth of Love*, consisting then of 24 sonnets, was published in 1876. The sequence, extended to 79 sonnets, was privately printed in 1889. Ten of these sonnets were omitted when the sequence was reprinted in Vol. I of the collected edition, in 1893.

For honor, passionate where duty lies,  
Most loved and loving: and they quickly tire  
Of Florence, that she one day more denies  
The embrace of wife and son, of sister or sire.

#### XXI

O flesh and blood, comrade to tragic pain  
And clownish merriment; whose sense could  
wake  
Sermons in stones, and count death but an  
ache,  
All things as vanity, yet nothing vain:  
The world, set in thy heart, thy passionate  
strain 5  
Revealed anew; but thou for man didst make  
Nature twice natural, only to shake  
Her kingdom with the creatures of thy brain.

Lo, Shakespeare, since thy time nature is  
loath  
To yield to art her fair supremacy; 10

In conquering one thou hast so enriched both.  
What shall I say? for God—whose wise decree  
Confirmeth all He did by all He doth—  
Doubled His whole creation making thee.

## XXVII

The fabled sea-snake, old Leviathan,  
Or else what grisly beast of scaly chine<sup>1</sup>  
That champ'd the ocean-wrack and swashed  
the brine,

Before the new and milder days of man,  
Had never rib nor bray<sup>2</sup> nor swindging<sup>3</sup> fan 5  
Like his iron swimmer of the Clyde or Tyne,  
Late-born of golden seed to breed a line  
Of offspring swifter and more huge of plan.

Straight is her going, for upon the sun  
When once she hath looked, her path and  
place are plain; 10  
With tireless speed she smiteth one by one  
The shuddering seas and foams along the  
main;  
And her eased breath, when her wild race is  
run,  
Roars through her nostrils like a hurricane.

## XLVII

Since then 'tis only pity looking back,  
Fear looking forward, and the busy mind  
Will in one woeful moment more upwind  
Than lifelong years unroll of bitter or black;  
What is man's privilege, his hoarding knack 5  
Of memory with foreboding so combined,  
Whereby he comes to dream he hath of kind<sup>4</sup>  
The perpetuity which all things lack?

Which but to hope is doubtful joy, to have  
Being a continuance of what, alas, 10  
We mourn, and scarcely bear with to the  
grave;  
Or something so unknown that it o'erpass  
The thought of comfort, and the sense that  
gave  
Cannot consider it through any glass.

## L

The world comes not to an end: her city-hives  
Swarm with the tokens of a changeless trade,  
With rolling wheel, driver and flagging jade,  
Rich men and beggars, children, priests and  
wives.

New homes on old are set, as lives on lives; 5  
Invention with invention overlaid:  
But still or tool or toy or book or blade  
Shaped for the hand, that holds and toils and  
strives.

<sup>1</sup>Crest.<sup>2</sup>Cry.<sup>3</sup>Hard-striking.<sup>4</sup>By nature.

The men to-day toil as their fathers taught,  
With little bettered means; for works depend  
On works and overlap, and thought on  
thought: 11

And through all change the smiles of hope  
amend

The weariest face, the same love changed in  
nought:

In this thing too the world comes not to an  
end.

## LI

O my uncared-for songs, what are ye worth,  
That in my secret book with so much care  
I write you, this one here and that one there,  
Marking the time and order of your birth?  
How, with a fancy so unkind to mirth, 5  
A sense so hard, a style so worn and bare,  
Look ye for any welcome anywhere  
From any shelf or heart-home on the earth?

Should others ask you this, say then I  
yearned

To write you such as once, when I was young,  
Finding I should have loved and thereto  
turned. 11

'Twere something yet to live again among  
The gentle youth beloved, and where I learned  
My art, be there remembered for my song.

## LIV

Since not the enamored sun with glance more  
fond

Kisses the foliage of his sacred tree,  
Than doth my waking thought arise on thee,  
Loving none near thee, like thee nor beyond;  
Nay, since I am sworn thy slave, and in the  
bond 5

Is writ my promise of eternity;  
Since to such high hope thou'st encouraged  
me,

That if thou look but from me I despond;

Since thou'rt my all in all, O think of this:  
Think of the dedication of my youth: 10  
Think of my loyalty, my joy, my bliss:  
Think of my sorrow, my despair and ruth,  
My sheer annihilation if I miss:  
Think—if thou shouldst be false—think of thy  
truth.

## LXII

I will be what God made me, nor protest  
Against the bent of genius in my time,  
That science of my friends robs all the best,  
While I love beauty, and was born to rime.

Be they our mighty men, and let me dwell 5  
In shadow among the mighty shades of old,  
With love's forsaken palace for my cell;  
Whence I look forth and all the world behold,



And say, These better days, in best things  
worse,  
This bastardy of time's magnificence, 10  
Will mend in fashion and throw off the curse,  
To crown new love with higher excellence.  
Cursed though I be to live my life alone,  
My toil is for man's joy, his joy my own.

LXIV

Ye blessed saints, that now in heaven enjoy  
The purchase of those tears, the world's dis-  
dain,  
Doth Love still with his war your peace annoy,  
Or hath Death freed you from his ancient  
pain? 4  
Have ye no springtide, and no burst of May  
In flowers and leafy trees, when solemn night  
Pants with love-music, and the holy day  
Breaks on the ear with songs of heavenly light?

What make ye and what strive for? keep ye  
thought  
Of us, or in new excellence divine 10  
Is old forgot? or do ye count for nought  
What the Greek did and what the Florentine?<sup>1</sup>  
We keep your memories well: O in your store  
Live not our best joys treasured evermore?

ELEGY

CLEAR and gentle stream!  
Known and loved so long,  
That hast heard the song  
And the idle dream  
Of my boyish day; 5  
While I once again  
Down thy margin stray,  
In the selfsame strain  
Still my voice is spent,  
With my old lament 10  
And my idle dream,  
Clear and gentle stream!

Where my old seat was  
Here again I sit,  
Where the long boughs knit 15  
Over stream and grass  
A translucent eaves:  
Where back eddies play  
Shipwreck with the leaves,  
And the proud swans stray, 20  
Sailing one by one  
Out of stream and sun,  
And the fish lie cool  
In their chosen pool.

Many an afternoon 25  
Of the summer day  
Dreaming here I lay;  
And I know how soon,  
Idly at its hour,  
First the deep bell hums 30  
From the minster tower,  
And then evening comes,  
Creeping up the glade,  
With her lengthening shade,  
And the tardy boon 35  
Of her brightening moon.

Clear and gentle stream!  
Ere again I go  
Where thou dost not flow,  
Well does it beseem 40  
Thee to hear again  
Once my youthful song,  
That familiar strain  
Silent now so long:  
Be as I content 45  
With my old lament  
And my idle dream,  
Clear and gentle stream.

ELEGY

THE wood is bare: a river-mist is steeping  
The trees that winter's chill of life bereaves:  
Only their stiffened boughs break silence,  
weeping  
Over their fallen leaves;

That lie upon the dank earth brown and  
rotten, 5  
Miry and matted in the soaking wet:  
Forgotten with the spring, that is forgotten  
By them that can forget.

Yet it was here we walked when ferns were  
springing,  
And through the mossy bank shot bud and  
blade:— 10  
Here found in summer, when the birds were  
singing,  
A green and pleasant shade.

'Twas here we loved in sunnier days and  
greener;  
And now, in this disconsolate decay, 14  
I come to see her where I most have seen her,  
And touch the happier day.

For on this path, at every turn and corner,  
The fancy of her figure on me falls:  
Yet walks she with the slow step of a mourner,  
Nor hears my voice that calls. 20

<sup>1</sup>Homer and Dante.

So through my heart there winds a track of  
feeling,

A path of memory, that is all her own:  
Whereto her phantom beauty ever stealing  
Haunts the sad spot alone.

About her steps the trunks are bare, the  
branches <sup>25</sup>

Drip heavy tears upon her downcast head;  
And bleed from unseen wounds that no sun  
stanches,  
For the year's sun is dead.

And dead leaves wrap the fruits that summer  
planted:

And birds that love the South have taken  
wing. <sup>30</sup>

The wanderer, loitering o'er the scene en-  
chanted,  
Weeps, and despairs of spring.

### I WILL NOT LET THEE GO

I WILL not let thee go.  
Ends all our month-long love in this?  
Can it be summed up so,  
Quit in a single kiss?  
I will not let thee go. <sup>5</sup>

I will not let thee go.  
If thy words' breath could scare thy deeds,  
As the soft south can blow  
And toss the feathered seeds,  
Then might I let thee go. <sup>10</sup>

I will not let thee go.  
Had not the great sun seen, I might;  
Or were he reckoned slow  
To bring the false to light,  
Then might I let thee go. <sup>15</sup>

I will not let thee go.  
The stars that crowd the summer skies  
Have watched us so below  
With all their million eyes,  
I dare not let thee go. <sup>20</sup>

I will not let thee go.  
Have we not chid the changeful moon,  
Now rising late, and now  
Because she set too soon,  
And shall I let thee go? <sup>25</sup>

I will not let thee go.  
Have not the young flowers been content,  
Plucked ere their buds could blow,  
To seal our sacrament?  
I cannot let thee go. <sup>30</sup>

I will not let thee go.  
I hold thee by too many bands:  
Thou sayest farewell, and lo!  
I have thee by the hands,  
And will not let thee go. <sup>35</sup>

### TRIOLET

ALL women born are so perverse  
No man need boast their love possessing.  
If nought seem better, nothing's worse:  
All women born are so perverse.  
From Adam's wife, that proved a curse <sup>5</sup>  
Though God had made her for a blessing,  
All women born are so perverse  
No man need boast their love possessing.

### A PASSER-BY

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails  
crowding,  
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent  
West,

That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,  
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy  
quest?

Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales  
oppressed, <sup>5</sup>

When skies are cold and misty, and hail is  
hurling,

Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest  
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails  
furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well  
thou knowest,

Already arrived am inhaling the odorous  
air: <sup>10</sup>

I watch thee enter unerringly where thou  
goest,

And anchor queen of the strange shipping  
there,

Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts  
bare;

Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the  
snow-capped, grandest

Peak, that is over the feathery palms more  
fair <sup>15</sup>

Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still  
thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and name-  
less,

I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly  
divine

That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage  
blameless,

Thy port assured in a happier land than  
mine. <sup>20</sup>

But for all I have given thee, beauty enough  
is thine,  
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shroud-  
ing,  
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's  
line  
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails  
crowding.

# THERE IS A HILL BESIDE THE SILVER THAMES

THERE is a hill beside the silver Thames,  
Shady with birch and beech and odorous  
pine:  
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems  
Steeplly the thickets to his floods decline.  
Straight trees in every place 5  
Their thick tops interlace,  
And pendant branches trail their foliage fine  
Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows:  
His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade, 10  
Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes  
Straight to the caverned pool his toil has  
made.  
His winter floods lay bare  
The stout roots in the air:  
His summer streams are cool, when they have  
played 15  
Among their fibrous hair.

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,  
And hides it from the meadow, where in peace  
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,  
Robbing the golden market of the bees: 20  
And laden barges float  
By banks of myosote;<sup>1</sup>  
And scented flag and golden flower-de-lys  
Delay the loitering boat.

And on this side the island, where the pool 25  
Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass  
The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,  
And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass;  
Where spreading crowfoot mars  
The drowning nenuphars,<sup>2</sup> 30  
Waving the tassels of her silken grass  
Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing grows,  
Not the white water-lily spoked with gold;  
Though best she loves the hollows, and well  
knows 35  
On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold:

Yet should her roots but try  
Within these deeps to lie,  
Not her long reaching stalk could ever hold  
Her waxen head so high. 40

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his  
hook  
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree  
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book,  
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery;  
And dreams, or falls asleep, 45  
While curious fishes peep  
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully  
Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,  
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering  
care 50  
Upon a staff propping his weary knees,  
May by the pathway of the forest fare:  
As from a buried day  
Across the mind will stray 54  
Some perishing mute shadow,—and unaware  
He passeth on his way.

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,  
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream:  
Or lead his love there when the hot hours  
chafe  
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam; 60  
Or watch, as fades the light,  
The gibbous moon<sup>3</sup> grow bright,  
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,  
And glorify the night. 64

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames?  
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow!  
O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,  
No sharer of my secret I allow:  
Lest ere I come the while  
Strange feet your shades defile; 70  
Or lest the burly oarsman turn his prow  
Within your guardian isle.

## SPRING

### ODE I

#### INVITATION TO THE COUNTRY

AGAIN with pleasant green  
Has Spring renewed the wood,  
And where the bare trunks stood  
Are leafy arbors seen;  
And back on budding boughs 5  
Come birds, to court and pair,  
Whose rival amorous vows  
Amaze the scented air.

<sup>1</sup>Forget-me-not.

<sup>2</sup>Water-lilies.

<sup>3</sup>The moon is gibbous when its bright part is greater than a semicircle but less than a circle.



The freshets are unbound,  
And leaping from the hill, 10  
Their mossy banks refill  
With streams of light and sound:  
And scattered down the meads,  
From hour to hour unfold  
A thousand buds and beads 15  
In stars and cups of gold.

Now hear, and see, and note,  
The farms are all astir;  
And every laborer 20  
Has doffed his winter coat;  
And how with specks of white  
They dot the brown hillside,  
Or jaunt and sing outright  
As by their teams they stride.

They sing to feel the Sun 25  
Regain his wanton strength;  
To know the year at length  
Rewards their labor done;  
To see the rootless stake  
They set bare in the ground, 30  
Burst into leaf, and shake  
Its grateful scent around.

Ah now an evil lot  
Is his, who toils for gain,  
Where crowded chimneys stain 35  
The heavens his choice forgot;  
'Tis on the blighted trees  
That deck his garden dim,  
And in the tainted breeze,  
That sweet Spring comes to him. 40

Far sooner I would choose  
The life of brutes that bask,  
Than set myself a task,  
Which inborn powers refuse: 45  
And rather far enjoy  
The body, than invent  
A duty, to destroy  
The ease which nature sent;

And country life I praise,  
And lead, because I find 50  
The philosophic mind  
Can take no middle ways;  
She will not leave her love  
To mix with men, her art  
Is all to strive above 55  
The crowd, or stand apart.

Thrice happy he, the rare  
Prometheus, who can play  
With hidden things, and lay  
New realms of nature bare; 60  
Whose venturous step has trod  
Hell underfoot, and won  
A crown from man and God  
For all that he has done.—

That highest gift of all, 65  
Since crabbéd fate did flood  
My heart with sluggish blood,  
I look not mine to call;  
But, like a truant freed,  
Fly to the woods, and claim 70  
A pleasure for the deed  
Of my inglorious name:

And am content, denied  
The best, in choosing right;  
For Nature can delight 75  
Fancies unoccupied  
With ecstasies so sweet  
As none can even guess,  
Who walk not with the feet  
Of joy in idleness. 80

Then leave your joyless ways,  
My friend, my joys to see.  
The day you come shall be  
The choice of chosen days: 85  
You shall be lost, and learn  
New being, and forget  
The world, till your return  
Shall bring your first regret.

## SPRING

### ODE II

#### REPLY

BEHOLD! the radiant Spring,  
In splendor decked anew,  
Down from her heaven of blue  
Returns on sunlit wing: 5  
The zephyrs of her train  
In fleecy clouds disport,  
And birds to greet her reign  
Summon their silvan court.

And here in street and square  
The prisoned trees contest 10  
Her favor with the best,  
To robe themselves full fair:  
And forth their buds provoke,  
Forgetting winter brown,  
And all the mire and smoke 15  
That wrapped the dingy town.

Now he that loves indeed  
His pleasure must awake,  
Lest any pleasure take  
Its flight, and he not heed; 20  
For of his few short years  
Another now invites  
His hungry soul, and cheers  
His life with new delights.

And who loves Nature more 25  
 Than he, whose painful art  
 Has taught and skilled his heart  
 To read her skill and lore?  
 Whose spirit leaps more high,  
 Plucking the pale primrose, 30  
 Than his whose feet must fly  
 The pasture where it grows?

One long in city pent  
 Forgets, or must complain:  
 But think not I can stain 35  
 My heaven with discontent;  
 Nor wallow with that sad,  
 Backsliding herd, who cry  
 That Truth must make man bad,  
 And pleasure is a lie. 40

Rather while Reason lives  
 To mark me from the beast,  
 I'll teach her serve at least  
 To heal the wound she gives:  
 Nor need she strain her powers 45  
 Beyond a common flight,  
 To make the passing hours  
 Happy from morn till night.

Since health our toil rewards,  
 And strength is labor's prize, 50  
 I hate not, nor despise  
 The work my lot accords;  
 Nor fret with fears unkind  
 The tender joys, that bless  
 My hard-won peace of mind, 55  
 In hours of idleness.

Then what charm company  
 Can give, know I,—if wine  
 Go round, or throats combine  
 To set dumb music free. 60  
 Or deep in wintertide  
 When winds without make moan,  
 I love my own fireside  
 Not least when most alone.

Then oft I turn the page 65  
 In which our country's name,  
 Spoiling the Greek of fame,  
 Shall sound in every age!<sup>1</sup>  
 Or some Terentian play  
 Renew, whose excellent 70  
 Adjusted folds betray  
 How once Menander went.<sup>2</sup>

Or if grave study suit  
 The yet unwearied brain,  
 Plato can teach again, 75  
 And Socrates dispute;  
 Till fancy in a dream  
 Confront their souls with mine,  
 Crowning the mind supreme,  
 And her delights divine. 80

While pleasure yet can be  
 Pleasant, and fancy sweet,  
 I bid all care retreat  
 From my philosophy;  
 Which, when I come to try 85  
 Your simpler life, will find,  
 I doubt not, joys to vie  
 With those I leave behind.

### DEJECTION

WHEREFORE to-night so full of care,  
 My soul, revolving hopeless strife,  
 Pointing at hindrance, and the bare  
 Painful escapes of fitful life?

Shaping the doom that may befall 5  
 By precedent of terror past:  
 By love dishonored, and the call  
 Of friendship slighted at the last?

By treasured names, the little store  
 That memory out of wreck could save 10  
 Of loving hearts, that gone before  
 Call their old comrade to the grave?

O soul, be patient: thou shalt find  
 A little matter mend all this;  
 Some strain of music to thy mind, 15  
 Some praise for skill not spent amiss.

Again shall pleasure overflow  
 Thy cup with sweetness, thou shalt taste  
 Nothing but sweetness, and shalt grow  
 Half sad for sweetness run to waste. 20

O happy life! I hear thee sing,  
 O rare delight of mortal stuff!  
 I praise my days for all they bring,  
 Yet are they only not enough.

### LONDON SNOW

WHEN men were all asleep the snow came  
 flying,  
 In large white flakes falling on the city brown,  
 Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely  
 lying,  
 Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy  
 town;

<sup>1</sup>Shakespeare's fame impairs Homer's to this extent, that we put the two beside each other where once Homer stood alone.

<sup>2</sup>Terence's plays are, so to say, Roman reflections of the Greek comedies of Menander, whose works have perished or survive only in fragments.

Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs  
failing; 5

Lazily and incessantly floating down and  
down:

Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and  
railing;

Hiding difference, making unevenness even,  
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and  
sailing. 9

All night it fell, and when full inches seven  
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted light-  
ness,

The clouds blew off from a high and frosty  
heaven;

And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed  
brightness

Of the winter dawning, the strange un-  
heavenly glare:

The eye marveled—marveled at the dazzling  
whiteness; 15

The ear hearkened to the stillness of the  
solemn air;

No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,  
And the busy morning cries came thin and  
spare.

Then boys I heard, as they went to school,  
calling,

They gathered up the crystal manna to  
freeze 20

Their tongues with tasting, their hands with  
snowballing;

Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the  
knees;

Or peering up from under the white-mossed  
wonder,

"O look at the trees!" they cried, "O look  
at the trees!"

With lessened load a few carts creak and  
blunder, 25

Following along the white deserted way,  
A country company long dispersed asunder:

When now already the sun, in pale display  
Standing by Paul's high dome,<sup>1</sup> spread forth  
below

His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of  
the day. 30

For now doors open, and war is waged with  
the snow;

And trains of somber men, past tale of number,  
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil  
they go:

But even for them awhile no cares encumber  
Their minds diverted; the daily word is un-  
spoken, 35

The daily thoughts of labor and sorrow slum-  
ber

At the sight of the beauty that greets them,  
for the charm they have broken.

## THE PHILOSOPHER TO HIS MISTRESS

BECAUSE thou canst not see,  
Because thou canst not know  
The black and hopeless woe  
That hath encompassed me:  
Because, should I confess 5  
The thought of my despair,  
My words would wound thee less  
Than swords can hurt the air:

Because with thee I seem  
As one invited near 10  
To taste the faery cheer  
Of spirits in a dream;  
Of whom he knoweth nought  
Save that they vie to make  
All motion, voice and thought 15  
A pleasure for his sake:

Therefore more sweet and strange  
Has been the mystery  
Of thy long love to me,  
That doth not quit, nor change, 20  
Nor tax my solemn heart,  
That kisseth in a gloom,  
Knowing not who thou art  
That givest, nor to whom.

Therefore the tender touch  
Is more; more dear the smile:  
And thy light words beguile  
My wisdom overmuch:  
And O with swiftness fly  
The fancies of my song 30  
To happy worlds, where I  
Still in thy love belong.

## O YOUTH WHOSE HOPE IS HIGH

O YOUTH whose hope is high,  
Who dost to Truth aspire,  
Whether thou live or die,  
O look not back nor tire.

Thou that art bold to fly 5  
Through tempest, flood and fire,  
Nor dost not shrink to try  
Thy heart in torments dire:

If thou canst Death defy,  
If thy Faith is entire, 10  
Press onward, for thine eye  
Shall see thy heart's desire.

Beauty and love are nigh,  
And with their deathless quire  
Soon shall thine eager cry 15  
Be numbered and expire.

<sup>1</sup>St. Paul's Cathedral.



# I LOVE ALL BEAUTEOUS THINGS

I LOVE all beauteous things,  
I seek and adore them;  
God hath no better praise,  
And man in his hasty days  
Is honored for them. 5

I too will something make  
And joy in the making;  
Although to-morrow it seem  
Like the empty words of a dream  
Remembered on waking. 10

# WHEN MY LOVE WAS AWAY

WHEN my love was away,  
Full three days were not sped,  
I caught my fancy astray  
Thinking if she were dead,

And I alone, alone: 5  
It seemed in my misery  
In all the world was none  
Ever so lone as I.

I wept; but it did not shame  
Nor comfort my heart: away 10  
I rode as I might, and came  
To my love at close of day.

The sight of her stilled my fears,  
My fairest-hearted love:  
And yet in her eyes were tears: 15  
Which when I questioned of,

O now thou art come, she cried,  
'Tis fled: but I thought to-day  
I never could here abide,  
If thou wert longer away. 20

# SO SWEET LOVE SEEMED THAT APRIL MORN

SO SWEET love seemed that April morn,  
When first we kissed beside the thorn,  
So strangely sweet, it was not strange  
We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell—let truth be told— 5  
That love will change in growing old;  
Though day by day is nought to see,  
So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass  
Quite to forget what once he was, 10  
Nor even in fancy to recall  
The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,  
So deep in summer floods is drowned,  
I wonder, bathed in joy complete, 15  
How love so young could be so sweet.

# MY DELIGHT AND THY DELIGHT

MY DELIGHT and thy delight  
Walking, like two angels white,  
In the gardens of the night:

My desire and thy desire  
Twining to a tongue of fire, 5  
Leaping live, and laughing higher;  
Through the everlasting strife  
In the mystery of life.

Love, from whom the world begun,  
Hath the secret of the sun. 10

Love can tell, and love alone,  
Whence the million stars were strewn,  
Why each atom knows its own,  
How, in spite of woe and death,  
Gay is life, and sweet is breath: 15

This he taught us, this we knew,  
Happy in his science true,  
Hand in hand as we stood  
'Neath the shadows of the wood,  
Heart to heart as we lay 20  
In the dawning of the day.

# MELANCHOLIA

THE sickness of desire, that in dark days  
Looks on the imagination of despair,  
Forgetteth man, and stinteth God his praise;  
Nor but in sleep findeth a cure for care.

Incertainty that once gave scope to dream 5  
Of laughing enterprise and glory untold,  
Is now a blackness that no stars redeem,  
A wall of terror in a night of cold.

Fool! thou that hast impossibly desired  
And now impatiently despair'st, see 10  
How nought is changed: Joy's wisdom is at-  
tired

Splendid for others' eyes if not for thee:  
Not love or beauty or youth from earth is  
fled:

If they delight thee not, 'tis thou art dead.

## LIONEL JOHNSON (1867-1902)

Lionel Pigot Johnson was born at Broadstairs, Kent, on 15 March, 1867, the third son of Captain William Victor Johnson of the ninetyeth regiment of light infantry by his wife Catherine Delicia Walters. In Johnson's boyhood the family lived at Mold, in Flintshire, and later at Kingsmead, Windsor Forest. The boy went to school at Durdham Down, Clifton, and then entered Winchester College, where he gained a scholarship in 1880. He remained at Winchester six years, winning a very distinguished place in the school, while it won a secure place in his affections. From 1884 to 1886 he edited the school paper, *The Wykehamist*, converting it as far as he dared into a literary review. A born man of letters, he had been from childhood an inveterate reader, and he could scarcely remember the time when he had not been writing verse. He was always small of stature, and frail (at the time of his death it was discovered that his skull was that of a child, and had never developed to normal thickness), and he engaged in no athletic sports, though he was fond of walking, and went on walking expeditions into the lake country, and Wales, and Cornwall. In 1886 he entered New College, Oxford, having won the Winchester scholarship there. He gained a first class in *literae humaniores* in 1890. At Oxford he was deeply influenced by Walter Pater—whose sway, however, was tempered by Lionel's devoted study of Dr. Johnson. It is said, in fact, that when Lionel went up to London in 1890 to embark on a literary career he carried with him twelve letters of introduction addressed to twelve editors—all of them written by Pater. He was already a poet of high promise, and he now—without abandoning poetry—became a critic;—England's one critic of the first rank in the 1890's, as some have thought. In 1891 he was received into the Roman Catholic Church. In the following year he completed, and in 1894 published, his valuable commentary, *The Art of Thomas Hardy*.

In 1895 he published *Poems*, and in 1897 *Ireland with Other Poems*. At the end of the century his health became impaired, as a consequence of excessive drinking, and he suffered a prolonged and severe illness. From this, however, he had apparently recovered when he accidentally fell, late at night, in Fleet Street, and fractured his skull. He died a few days later, on 4 October, 1902, in St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Since his death two volumes of his critical essays, collected from periodicals, have been published (*Post Liminium*, 1911; and *Reviews*, 1921); and his *Poetical Works* (1915).

Johnson left poems, Mr. Ezra Pound has said, "as beautiful as any in English." Louise Imogen Guiney, in an essay written shortly after his death, said that his conception of the function of a man of letters amounted to this: "That he was glad to be a bond-slave to his own discipline; that there should be no limit to the constraints and the labor self-imposed; that in pursuit of the best he would never count cost, never lower a pennon, never bow the knee to Baal. It was not his isolated position, nor his exemption from the corroding breath of poverty, which made it easy for such an one to hold his ground; for nothing can make easy that strenuous and entire consecration of a soul to what it is given to do. It extended to the utmost detail of composition. The proud melancholy charm of his finest stanzas rests upon the severest adherence to the laws and by-laws of rhythm; in no page of his was there ever a rhetorical trick or an underbred rime. Excess and show were foreign to him." He was, in short, devoted to the virtues of classical literature, both in his poetry and in his criticism; and consequently it is a somewhat ironical fact that his interest in nationalism and in the Irish literary revival of the end of the last century caused him to try to link himself with that movement.

### MAGIC<sup>1</sup>

THEY wrong with ignorance a royal choice,  
Who cavil at my loneliness and labor:  
For them, the luring wonder of a voice,  
The viol's cry for them, the harp and tabor:  
For me divine austerity, 5  
And voices of philosophy.

Ah! light imaginations, that discern  
No passion in the citadel of passion:  
Their fancies lie on flowers; but my thoughts  
turn  
To thoughts and things of an eternal fashion:  
The majesty and dignity 11  
Of everlasting verity.

Mine is the sultry sunset, when the skies  
Tremble with strange, intolerable thunder:

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1887; published in *Ireland with Other Poems*.

And at the dead of an hushed night, these eyes  
Draw down the soaring oracles winged with  
wonder: 16

From the four winds they come to me,  
The Angels of Eternity.

Men pity me; poor men, who pity me!  
Poor, charitable, scornful souls of pity! 20  
I choose laborious loneliness: and ye  
Lead Love in triumph through the dancing  
city:

While death and darkness girdle me,  
I grope for immortality.

### THE CLASSICS<sup>1</sup>

FAIN to know golden things, fain to grow wise,  
Fain to achieve the secret of fair souls:  
His thought, scarce other lore need solemnize,  
Whom Virgil calms, whom Sophocles controls:

Whose conscience Æschylus, a warrior voice,  
Enchanted hath with majesties of doom: 6  
Whose melancholy mood can best rejoice,  
When Horace sings, and roses bower the tomb:

Who, following Caesar unto death, discerns  
What bitter cause was Rome's, to mourn that  
day: 10

With austere Tacitus for master, learns  
The look of empire in its proud decay:

Whom dread Lucretius of the mighty line  
Hath awed, but not borne down: who loves  
the flame,  
That leaped within Catullus the divine, 15  
His glory, and his beauty, and his shame:

Who dreams with Plato and, transcending  
dreams,  
Mounts to the perfect City of true God:  
Who hails its marvelous and haunting gleams,  
Treading the steady air, as Plato trod: 20

Who with Thucydides pursues the way,  
Feeling the heart-beats of the ages gone:  
Till fall the clouds upon the Attic day,  
And Syracuse draw tears for Marathon:

To whom these golden things best give delight:  
The music of most sad Simonides; 26  
Propertius' ardent graces; and the might  
Of Pindar chaunting by the olive trees:

Livy, and Roman consuls purple swathed:  
Plutarch, and heroes of the ancient earth: 30  
And Aristophanes, whose laughter scathed  
The souls of fools, and pealed in lyric mirth:

Æolian rose-leaves blown from Sappho's isle;  
Secular glories of Lycean thought:  
Sallies of Lucian, bidding wisdom smile; 35  
Angers of Juvenal, divinely wrought:

Pleasant, and elegant, and garrulous,  
Pliny: crowned Marcus, wistful and still  
strong:  
Sicilian seas and their Theocritus,  
Pastoral singer of the last Greek song: 40

Herodotus, all simple and all wise:  
Demosthenes, a lightning flame of scorn:  
The surge of Cicero, that never dies:  
And Homer, grand against the ancient morn.

### OXFORD<sup>2</sup>

OVER, the four long years! And now there  
rings

One voice of freedom and regret: *Farewell!*  
Now old remembrance sorrows, and now sings:  
But song from sorrow, now, I cannot tell.

City of weathered cloister and worn court; 5  
Gray city of strong towers and clustering  
spires:

Where art's fresh loveliness would first resort;  
Where lingering art kindled her latest fires.

Where on all hands, wondrous with ancient  
grace,  
Grace touched with age, rise works of goodliest  
men: 10

Next Wykeham's art obtain their splendid  
place

The zeal of Inigo, the strength of Wren.

Where at each coign of every antique street,  
A memory hath taken root in stone:  
There, Raleigh shone; there, toiled Franciscan  
feet; 15

There, Johnson flinched not, but endured,  
alone.

There, Shelley dreamed his white Platonic  
dreams;

There, classic Landor thrived on Roman  
thought;

There, Addison pursued his quiet themes;  
There, smiled Erasmus, and there, Colet  
taught. 20

And there, O memory more sweet than all!  
Lived he, whose eyes keep yet our passing  
light;

Whose crystal lips Athenian speech recall;  
Who wears Rome's purple with least pride,  
most right.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1890; published in *Poems*.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1890; published in *Ireland with Other Poems*.

<sup>3</sup>Cardinal Newman.



That is the Oxford, strong to charm us yet:  
 Eternal in her beauty and her past. 26  
 What, though her soul be vexed? She can  
 forget  
 Cares of an hour: only the great things last.

Only the gracious air, only the charm,  
 And ancient might of true humanities: 30  
 These, nor assault of man, nor time, can harm;  
 Not these, nor Oxford with her memories.

Together have we walked with willing feet  
 Gardens of plenteous trees, bowering soft  
 lawn:  
 Hills, whither Arnold wandered; and all sweet  
 June meadows, from the troubling world with-  
 drawn: 36

Chapels of cedarn fragrance, and rich gloom  
 Poured from empurpled panes on either hand:  
 Cool pavements, carved with legends of the  
 tomb:  
 Grave haunts, where we might dream, and  
 understand.

Over, the four long years! And unknown  
 powers 41  
 Call to us, going forth upon our way:  
 Ah! turn we, and look back upon the towers,  
 That rose above our lives, and cheered the day.

Proud and serene, against the sky, they gleam:  
 Proud and secure, upon the earth, they stand:  
 Our city hath the air of a pure dream, 47  
 And hers indeed is an Hesperian land.

Think of her so! the wonderful, the fair,  
 The immemorial, and the ever young:  
 The city, sweet with our forefathers' care;  
 The city, where the Muses all have sung. 52

Ill times may be; she hath no thought of time:  
 She reigns beside the waters yet in pride.  
 Rude voices cry: but in her ears the chime  
 Of full, sad bells brings back her old spring-  
 tide. 56

Like to a queen in pride of place, she wears  
 The splendor of a crown in Radcliffe's dome.  
 Well fare she, well! As perfect beauty fares;  
 And those high places, that are beauty's home.

### TO A FRIEND<sup>1</sup>

SWEET, hard and wise, your choice so early  
 made,  
 To cast the world away, a derelict:  
 To wear within the pure and austere shade  
 The sacred sable of Saint Benedict. 4

I give you praise: give me your better prayers.  
 The nothingness, which you have flung away,  
 To me seems full of fond delightful cares,  
 Visions, and dangers of the crowded day.

Give me your prayers: you keep no other  
 wealth, 9  
 And therefore are the wealthiest of my friends.  
 So shall you lure me by an holy stealth  
 At last into the Land where wandering ends.

### L A M B<sup>2</sup>

*Saint Charles!* for *Thackeray* called thee so:  
 Saint, at whose name our fond hearts glow:  
 See now, this age of tedious woe,  
 That snaps and snarls!  
 Thine was a life of tragic shade; 5  
 A life, of care and sorrow made:  
 But nought could make thine heart afraid,  
 Gentle *Saint Charles!*

Encumbered dearly with old books,  
 Thou, by the pleasant chimney nooks, 10  
 Didst laugh, with merry-meaning looks,  
 Thy griefs away:  
 We, bred on modern magazines,  
 Point out, how much our sadness means;  
 And some new woe our wisdom gleans, 15  
 Day by dull day.

Lover of *London!* whilst thy feet  
 Haunted each old familiar street,  
 Thy brave heart found life's turmoil sweet,  
 Despite life's pain. 20  
 We fume and fret and, when we can,  
 Cry up some new and noisy plan,  
 Big with the Rights and Wrongs of Man:  
 And where's the gain?

Gentle *Saint Charles!* I turn to thee, 25  
 Tender and true: thou teachest me  
 To take with joy, what joys there be,  
 And bear the rest.  
 Walking thy *London* day by day,  
 The thought of thee makes bright my way,  
 And in thy faith I fain would stay, 31  
 Doing my best.

Along the *Mall*, along the *Strand*,  
 Each turn I take, still thou dost stand,  
 A patron spirit, at mine hand: 35  
 So, should my choice,  
 Beside the dear book-laden stall,  
 On books not books perversely fall:  
*Nay!* take the play, the pastoral  
 Pleads thy wise voice. 40

<sup>1</sup>Written probably before 1891; published in *Poetical Works*.

<sup>2</sup>Written in 1891; published in *Ireland with Other Poems*.

So, though the world be full of noise;  
 And most new books, but foolish toys;  
 I share with thee thine ancient joys,  
*Marvell or Quarles:*  
 So, tired with rambling through the Town,  
 I taste the rich delights of *Browne*; 46  
 With *Elia* for the evening's crown,  
 Gentle *Saint Charles!*

CADGWITH<sup>1</sup>

MY WINDOWS open to the autumn night,  
 In vain I watched for sleep to visit me:  
 How should sleep dull mine ears, and dim my  
 sight,  
 Who saw the stars, and listened to the sea?

Ah, how the City of our God is fair! 5  
 If, without sea, and starless though it be,  
 For joy of the majestic beauty there,  
 Men shall not miss the stars, nor mourn the  
 sea.

GLORIES<sup>2</sup>

ROSES from Paestan rosaries!  
 More goodly red and white was she:  
 Her red and white were harmonies,  
 Not matched upon a Paestan tree.  
 Ivories blanch'd in Alban air! 5  
 She lies more purely blanch'd than you:  
 No Alban whiteness doth she wear,  
 But death's perfection of that hue.

Nay! now the rivalry is done,  
 Of red, and white, and whiter still: 10  
 She hath a glory from that sun,  
 Who falls not from Olympus hill.

THE DARK ANGEL<sup>3</sup>

DARK Angel, with thine aching lust  
 To rid the world of penitence:  
 Malicious Angel, who still dost  
 My soul such subtle violence!

Because of thee, no thought, no thing, 5  
 Abides for me undesecrate:  
 Dark Angel, ever on the wing,  
 Who never reachest me too late!

When music sounds, then changest thou  
 Its silvery to a sultry fire: 10  
 Nor will thine envious heart allow  
 Delight untortured by desire.

Through thee, the gracious Muses turn  
 To Furies, O mine Enemy!  
 And all the things of beauty burn 15  
 With flames of evil ecstasy.

Because of thee, the land of dreams  
 Becomes a gathering place of fears:  
 Until tormented slumber seems 20  
 One vehemence of useless tears.

When sunlight glows upon the flowers,  
 Or ripples down the dancing sea:  
 Thou, with thy troop of passionate powers,  
 Beleaguere'st, bewilderest, me.

Within the breath of autumn woods, 25  
 Within the winter silences:  
 Thy venomous spirit stirs and broods,  
 O Master of impieties!

The ardor of red flame is thine,  
 And thine the steely soul of ice: 30  
 Thou poisonest the fair design  
 Of nature, with unfair device.

Apples of ashes, golden bright;  
 Waters of bitterness, how sweet!  
 O banquet of a foul delight, 35  
 Prepared by thee, dark Paraclete!

Thou art the whisper in the gloom,  
 The hinting tone, the haunting laugh:  
 Thou art the adorer of my tomb,  
 The minstrel of mine epitaph. 40

I fight thee, in the Holy Name!  
 Yet, what thou dost, is what God saith:  
 Tempter! should I escape thy flame,  
 Thou wilt have helped my soul from Death:

The second Death, that never dies, 45  
 That cannot die, when time is dead:  
 Live Death, wherein the lost soul cries,  
 Eternally uncomforted.

Dark Angel, with thine aching lust!  
 Of two defeats, of two despairs: 50  
 Less dread, a change to drifting dust,  
 Than thine eternity of cares.

Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not so,  
 Dark Angel! triumph over me:  
*Lonely, unto the Lone I go;* 55  
*Divine, to the Divinity.*

A FRIEND<sup>4</sup>

HIS are the whitenesses of soul,  
 That Virgil had: he walks the earth  
 A classic saint, in self-control,  
 And comeliness, and quiet mirth.

<sup>1</sup>Written in 1892; published in *Poems*.<sup>2</sup>Written in 1893; published in *Poems*.<sup>3</sup>Written in 1893; published in *Poems*.<sup>4</sup>Written in 1894; published in *Poems*.

His presence wins me to repose: 5  
 When he is with me, I forget  
 All heaviness: and when he goes,  
 The comfort of the sun is set.

But in the lonely hours I learn,  
 How I can serve and thank him best: 10  
*God! trouble him: that he may turn  
 Through sorrow to the only rest.*

### WALTER PATER<sup>1</sup>

GRACIOUS God rest him! he who toiled so well  
 Secrets of grace to tell  
 Graciously; as the awed rejoicing priest  
 Officiates at the feast,  
 Knowing how deep within the liturgies 5  
 Lie hid the mysteries.  
 Half of a passionately pensive soul  
 He showed us, not the whole:  
 Who loved him best, they best, they only,  
 knew  
 The deeps they might not view; 10  
 That which was private between God and him;  
 To others, justly dim.  
 Calm Oxford autumns and preluding springs!  
 To me your memory brings  
 Delight upon delight, but chiefest one: 15  
 The thought of Oxford's son,  
 Who gave me of his welcome and his praise,  
 When white were still my days;  
 Ere death had left life darkling, nor had sent  
 Lament upon lament: 20  
 Ere sorrow told me how I loved my lost,  
 And bade me base love's cost.  
 Scholarship's constant saint, he kept her light  
 In him divinely white:

With cloistral jealousy of ardor strove 25  
 To guard her sacred grove,  
 Inviolatè by worldly feet, nor paced  
 In desecrating haste.  
 Oh, sweet grave smiling of that wisdom,  
 brought  
 From arduous ways of thought; 30  
 Oh, golden patience of that travailing soul  
 So hungered for the goal,  
 And vowed to keep, through subtly vigilant  
 pain,  
 From pastime on the plain,  
 Enamored of the difficult mountain air 35  
 Up beauty's Hill of Prayer!  
 Stern is the faith of art, right stern, and he  
 Loved her severity.  
 Momentous things he prized, gradual and fair  
 Births of a passionate air: 40  
 Some austere setting of an ancient sun,  
 Its midday glories done,  
 Over a silent melancholy sea  
 In sad serenity:  
 Some delicate dawning of a new desire, 45  
 Distilling fragrant fire  
 On hearts of men prophetically fain  
 To feel earth young again:  
 Some strange rich passage of the dreaming  
 earth,  
 Fulfilled with warmth and worth. 50  
 Ended, his service: yet, albeit farewell  
 Tolls the faint vesper bell,  
 Patient beneath his Oxford trees and towers  
 He still is gently ours:  
 Hierarch of the spirit, pure and strong, 55  
 Worthy Uranian song.  
 Gracious God keep him: and God grant to me  
 By miracle to see  
 That unforgettably most gracious friend,  
 In the never-ending end! 60

<sup>1</sup>The last poem Johnson wrote; published in *Poetical Works*.



## GEORGE GISSING (1857-1903)

George Robert Gissing was born at Wakefield on 22 November, 1857. His father was a pharmaceutical chemist, with scientific interests, and the author of a work on the flora of Wakefield. His mother, Margaret Bedford, was the daughter of a solicitor. After his period of earliest schooling at Wakefield, Gissing was sent to Lindow Grove, a Quaker school at Alderley Edge. There his consciousness of intellectual superiority, entirely just, and perhaps inevitable though it was, tended to isolate him from his school-fellows. In 1872 he came out first, amongst candidates from all England, in the Oxford local examinations, and later won a scholarship at Owens College, Manchester. During his first year there he gave every evidence of the highest distinction, in both classical and English studies. He then, however, committed a disastrous act which colored his whole future. He befriended a girl of the street, deluding himself with the notion that he might reclaim her. The effort required money, of course, and when his own small means were exhausted he resorted to the pockets of fellow-students. His thefts were soon discovered, and he was imprisoned. Upon his release, feeling that he was now an outcast from society, he quixotically resolved at least to make a thorough job of his attempt at reclamation, married the girl, and left Manchester to seek a means of livelihood. The marriage, as anybody would have prophesied, proved a grievous mistake. The girl went from bad to worse, and soon made life with her an impossibility—though Gissing, despite his desperate poverty, continued to give her money as long as she lived. Meanwhile his hardships were great, and for many years he barely contrived to exist. After various trials of menial employment in England he took steerage passage to America, where he apparently tried everything—he was a classical tutor one month, and a gas-fitter in Boston another—without appreciable success; finally managing, however, to return to Europe with a little money in 1877. He then, it is said, spent some time in Jena, studying Goethe, Haeckel, Schopenhauer, Comte, and Shelley, and presently went over to England, resolved to try his fortune as a writer of fiction.

His first novel, *Workers in the Dawn*, was published in 1880, and had almost no readers, though Frederic Harrison and John Morley both recognized its power and promise and gave encouragement to the author. From that time novels followed regularly and frequently, and in the course

of years some public recognition came to Gissing; but his sales were always small and to the end of his life he was worried by financial difficulties, which during the 1880's were usually acute. His prevailing theme during the first eleven or twelve years of his literary career was suggested by his own experience. He treated realistically the horrors of poverty in the great cities built up by our modern industrial civilization. He then wrote several novels in which he applied the methods of realism to middle-class life; and finally, as he grew older, wiser, and somewhat easier in the conditions of his life, he attained in his latest books a serenity and detachment and beauty which give them a real measure of classic quality. He was in none of his books a novelist of the first rank, and it is easy to see why he never attained popularity. He disdained it. "I want money and all it will bring very badly," he wrote to a sister in 1887, "but I want a respectable position in literature yet more. When I write, I think of my *best* readers, not of the mob." The consequence a publisher's man set down when he complained of one of Gissing's books that it "is too painful to please the ordinary novel reader, and treats of scenes that can never attract the subscribers to Mr. Mudie's Library." Nevertheless, Gissing's novels continue to be read, and now seem destined to a long life; and Mrs. Virginia Woolf has discerningly given one reason for their vitality: "Gissing is one of the extremely rare novelists who believes in the power of mind, who makes his people think. They are thus differently poised from the majority of fictitious men and women. The awful hierarchy of the passions is slightly displaced. Social snobbery does not exist; money is desired almost entirely to buy bread and butter; love itself takes a second place. But the brain works, and that alone is enough to give us a sense of freedom. . . . The impersonal side of life is given its due place in the scheme. 'Why don't people write about the really important things of life?' Gissing makes one of his characters exclaim, and at the unexpected cry the horrid burden of fiction begins to slip from the shoulders. Is it possible that we are going to talk of other things besides falling in love, important though that is, and going to dinner with duchesses, fascinating though that is? . . . His books . . . owe their peculiar grimness to the fact that the people who suffer most are capable of making their suffering part of a reasoned view of life.

The thought endures when the feeling is gone. Their unhappiness represents something more lasting than a personal reverse; it becomes part of a view of life, . . . as life seemed to a thoughtful man."

Gissing's books, following *Workers in the Dawn*, were: *The Unclassed* (1884); *Isabel Clarendon* (1886); *Demos* (1886); *Thyrza* (1887); *A Life's Morning* (1888); *The Nether World* (1889); *The Emancipated* (1890); *New Grub Street* (1891); *Denzil Quarrier* (1892); *Born in Exile* (1892); *The Odd Women* (1893); *In the Year of Jubilee* (1894); *Eve's Ransom* (1895); *The Paying Guest* (1895); *Sleeping Fires* (1895); *The Whirlpool* (1897); *Charles Dickens, A Critical Study* (1898); *Human Odds and Ends* (1898); *The Town Traveler* (1898); *The Crown of Life* (1899); *Our Friend the Charlatan* (1901); *By the Ionian Sea, Notes of a Ramble in Southern Italy* (1901); *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* (1903); and, posthumously published, *Veramilda* (unfinished, 1904), *Will Warburton* (1905), and some shorter tales. Of them all, probably *Ryecroft* is the most nearly perfect, and this was Gissing's own opinion. In 1900 he wrote to a friend that he had just executed a project that had been in his head for some ten years. "It consists," he went on, "of the informal diary of a fifty-year old Grub Street toiler, who, having

come in for a legacy of £300 a year, goes down to a cottage on the Mendips, and there passes his last years of life, in great happiness. A strange miscellany, this book, but . . . the best I have yet done, I fancy," or, he added in a later letter, "am likely to do; the thing most likely to last when all my other futile work has followed my futile life." These last words were written when he was seriously ill, and had not much longer to live.

In February, 1891, following the death of his first wife, he had married the daughter of a boarding-house keeper, who bore him two sons, but who proved not less impossible as a wife than had the first. In the 1890's he lived much away from London, at Exeter, at Dorking (where he became acquainted with George Meredith), at Clevedon, and elsewhere. Throughout his life a devoted student of the classics, in the previous decade he had been enabled by the profits from *Demos* to visit Italy and Greece; and in the autumn of 1897 he revisited Italy with Mr. H. G. Wells. In 1898 he met a highly educated and beautiful French woman with whom he passed his last years, in Paris and in southern France, whither he went in December, 1901, because he was threatened with tuberculosis. He died of pneumonia at St. Jean Pied de Port on 28 December, 1903.

## THE PRIVATE PAPERS OF HENRY RYECROFT<sup>1</sup>

### SPRING

#### I

FOR more than a week my pen has lain untouched. I have written nothing for seven whole days, not even a letter. Except during one or two bouts of illness such a thing never happened in my life before. In my life; the life, that is, which had to be supported by anxious toil; the life which was not lived for living's sake, as all life should be, but under the goad of fear. The earning of money should be a means to an end. For more than thirty years—I began to support myself at sixteen—I had to regard it as the end itself.

I could imagine that my old penholder feels reproachfully towards me. Has it not served me well? Why do I, in my happiness, let it lie there neglected, gathering dust? The same penholder that has lain against my forefinger day after day, for—how many

years? Twenty at least; I remember buying it at a shop in Tottenham Court Road. By the same token I bought that day a paper-weight, which cost me a whole shilling—an extravagance which made me tremble. The penholder shone with its new varnish, now it is plain brown wood from end to end. On my forefinger it has made a callosity.

Old companion, yet old enemy! How many a time have I taken it up, loathing the necessity, heavy in head and heart, my hand shaking, my eyes sick-dazzled! How I dreaded the white page I had to foul with ink! Above all, on days such as this, when the blue eyes of spring laughed from between rosy clouds, when the sunlight shimmered upon my table and made me long, long all but to madness, for the scent of the flowering earth, for the green of hillside larches, for the singing of the skylark above the downs. There was a time—it seems further away than childhood—when I took up my pen with eagerness; if my hand trembled it was with hope. But a hope that fooled me, for never a page of my writing deserved to live. I can say that now without bitterness. It was youthful error, and only the force of circumstance prolonged it. The

<sup>1</sup>First published as a serial in 1902 in the *Fortnightly Review*, under the title *An Author at Grass*. Published as a book in 1903 with the title above given.

world has done me no injustice; thank Heaven I have grown wise enough not to rail at it for this! And why should any man who writes, even if he write things immortal, nurse anger at the world's neglect? Who asked him to publish? Who promised him a hearing? Who has broken faith with him? If my shoemaker turn me out an excellent pair of boots, and I, in some mood of cantankerous unreason, throw them back upon his hands, the man has just cause of complaint. But your poem, your novel, who bargained with you for it? If it is honest journeywork, yet lacks purchasers, at most you may call yourself a hapless tradesman. If it come from on high, with what decency do you fret and fume because it is not paid for in heavy cash? For the work of man's mind there is one test, and one alone—the judgment of generations yet unborn. If you have written a great book, the world to come will know of it. But you don't care for posthumous glory. You want to enjoy fame in a comfortable armchair. Ah, that is quite another thing! Have the courage of your desire. Admit yourself a merchant, and protest to gods and men that the merchandise you offer is of better quality than much which sells for a high price. You may be right, and indeed it is hard upon you that Fashion does not turn to your stall.

## II

THE exquisite quiet of this room! I have been sitting in utter idleness, watching the sky, viewing the shape of golden sunlight upon the carpet, which changes as the minutes pass, letting my eye wander from one framed print to another, and along the ranks of my beloved books. Within the house nothing stirs. In the garden I can hear singing of birds, I can hear the rustle of their wings. And thus, if it please me, I may sit all day long, and into the profounder quiet of the night.

My house is perfect. By great good fortune I have found a housekeeper no less to my mind—a low-voiced, light-footed woman of discreet age, strong and deft enough to render me all the service I require, and not afraid of solitude. She rises very early. By my breakfast-time there remains little to be done under the roof save dressing of meals. Very rarely do I hear even a clink of crockery;

never the closing of a door or window. Oh, blessed silence!

There is not the remotest possibility of any one's calling upon me, and that I should call upon any one else is a thing undreamt of. I owe a letter to a friend; perhaps I shall write it before bedtime; perhaps I shall leave it till to-morrow morning. A letter of friendship should never be written save when the spirit prompts. I have not yet looked at the newspaper. Generally I leave it till I come back tired from my walk; it amuses me then to see what the noisy world is doing, what new self-torments men have discovered, what new forms of vain toil, what new occasions of peril and of strife. I grudge to give the first freshness of the morning mind to things so sad and foolish.

My house is perfect. Just large enough to allow the grace of order in domestic circumstance; just that superfluity of intramural space, to lack which is to be less than at one's ease. The fabric is sound; the work in wood and plaster tells of a more leisurely and a more honest age than ours. The stairs do not creak under my step; I am waylaid by no unkindly draught; I can open or close a window without muscle-ache. As to such trifles as the tint and device of wall-paper, I confess my indifference; be the walls only unobtrusive, and I am satisfied. The first thing in one's home is comfort; let beauty of detail be added if one has the means, the patience, the eye.

To me, this little book-room is beautiful, and chiefly because it is home. Through the greater part of life I was homeless. Many places have I inhabited, some which my soul loathed, and some which pleased me well; but never till now with that sense of security which makes a home. At any moment I might have been driven forth by evil hap, by nagging necessity. For all that time did I say within myself: Some day, perchance, I shall have a home; yet the "perchance" had more and more of emphasis as life went on, and at the moment when fate was secretly smiling on me, I had all but abandoned hope. I have my home at last. When I place a new volume on my shelves, I say: Stand there whilst I have eyes to see you; and a joyous tremor thrills me. This house is mine on a lease of a score of years. So long I certainly shall not live; but, if I did, even so long should



I have the wherewithal to pay my rent and buy my food.

I think with compassion of the unhappy mortals for whom no such sun will ever rise. I should like to add to the Litany a new petition: "For all inhabitants of great towns, and especially for all such as dwell in lodgings, boarding-houses, flats, or any other sordid substitute for Home which need or foolishness may have contrived."

In vain I have pondered the Stoic virtues. I know that it is folly to fret about the spot of one's abode on this little earth.

All places that the eye of heaven visits  
Are to the wise man ports and happy havens.<sup>1</sup>

But I have always worshiped wisdom afar off. In the sonorous period of the philosopher, in the golden measure of the poet, I find it of all things lovely. To its possession I shall never attain. What will it serve me to pretend a virtue of which I am incapable? To me the place and manner of my abode is of supreme import; let it be confessed, and there an end of it. I am no cosmopolite. Were I to think that I should die away from England, the thought would be dreadful to me. And in England, this is the dwelling of my choice; this is my home.

### III

I AM no botanist, but I have long found pleasure in herb-gathering. I love to come upon a plant which is unknown to me, to identify it with the help of my book, to greet it by name when next it shines beside my path. If the plant be rare, its discovery gives me joy. Nature, the great Artist, makes her common flowers in the common view; no word in human language can express the marvel and the loveliness even of what we call the vulgarest weed, but these are fashioned under the gaze of every passer-by. The rare flower is shaped apart, in places secret, in the Artist's subtler mood; to find it is to enjoy the sense of admission to a holier precinct. Even in my gladness I am awed.

To-day I have walked far, and at the end of my walk I found the little white-flowered woodruff. It grew in a copse of young ash. When I had looked long at the flower, I

delighted myself with the grace of the slim trees about it—their shining smoothness, their olive hue. Hard by stood a bush of wych elm; its tattered bark, overlined as if with the character of some unknown tongue, made the young ashes yet more beautiful.

It matters not how long I wander. There is no task to bring me back; no one will be vexed or uneasy, linger I ever so late. Spring is shining upon these lanes and meadows; I feel as if I must follow every winding track that opens by my way. Spring has restored to me something of the long-forgotten vigor of youth; I walk without weariness; I sing to myself like a boy, and the song is one I knew in boyhood.

That reminds me of an incident. Near a hamlet, in a lonely spot by a woodside, I came upon a little lad of perhaps ten years old, who, his head hidden in his arms against a tree trunk, was crying bitterly. I asked him what was the matter, and, after a little trouble—he was better than a mere bumpkin—I learned that, having been sent with sixpence to pay a debt, he had lost the money. The poor little fellow was in a state of mind which in a grave man would be called the anguish of despair; he must have been crying for a long time; every muscle in his face quivered as if under torture, his limbs shook; his eyes, his voice, uttered such misery as only the vilest criminal should be made to suffer. And it was because he had lost sixpence!

I could have shed tears with him—tears of pity and of rage at all this spectacle implied. On a day of indescribable glory, when earth and heaven shed benedictions upon the soul of man, a child, whose nature would have bidden him rejoice as only childhood may, wept his heart out because his hand had dropped a sixpenny piece! The loss was a very serious one, and he knew it; he was less afraid to face his parents, than overcome by misery at the thought of the harm he had done them. Sixpence dropped by the wayside, and a whole family made wretched! What are the due descriptive terms for a state of "civilization" in which such a thing as this is possible? I put my hand into my pocket, and wrought sixpennyworth of miracle.

It took me half an hour to recover my quiet mind. After all, it is as idle to rage against man's fatuity as to hope that he will ever be less a fool. For me, the great thing was my

<sup>1</sup>Shakespeare, *Richard II*, I, iii, 276.

sixpenny miracle. Why, I have known the day when it would have been beyond my power altogether, or else would have cost me a meal. Wherefore, let me again be glad and thankful.

## V

"SIR," said Johnson, "all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, show it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people laboring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune."

He knew what he was talking of, that rugged old master of common sense. Poverty is of course a relative thing. The term has reference, above all, to one's standing as an intellectual being. If I am to believe the newspapers, there are title-bearing men and women in England, who, had they an assured income of five-and-twenty shillings per week, would have no right to call themselves poor, for their intellectual needs are those of a stable-boy or scullery wench. Give me the same income and I can live, but I am poor indeed.

You tell me that money cannot buy the things most precious. Your commonplace proves that you have never known the lack of it. When I think of all the sorrow and the barrenness that has been wrought in my life by want of a few more pounds *per annum* than I was able to earn, I stand aghast at money's significance. What kindly joys have I lost—those simple forms of happiness to which every heart has claim—because of poverty! Meetings with those I loved made impossible year after year; sadness, misunderstanding, nay, cruel alienation, arising from inability to do the things I wished, and which I might have done had a little money helped me; endless instances of homely pleasure and contentment curtailed or forbidden by narrow means. I have lost friends merely through the constraints of my position; friends I might have made have remained strangers to me; solitude of the bitter kind, the solitude which is enforced at times when mind or heart longs for companionship, often cursed my life solely because I was poor. I think it would scarce be an exaggeration to say that there is no moral good which has not to be paid for in coin of the realm.

"Poverty," said Johnson again, "is so great

an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation, so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it."

For my own part, I needed no injunction to that effort of avoidance. Many a London garret knows how I struggled with the unwelcome chamber-fellow. I marvel she did not abide with me to the end. It is a sort of inconsequence in Nature, and sometimes makes me vaguely uneasy through nights of broken sleep.

## X

MENTALLY and physically, I must be much older than my years. At three-and-fifty a man ought not to be brooding constantly on his vanished youth. These days of spring which I should be enjoying for their own sake, do but turn me to reminiscence, and my memories are of the springs that were lost.

Some day I will go to London and revisit all the places where I housed in the time of my greatest poverty. I have not seen them for a quarter of a century or so. Not long ago, had anyone asked me how I felt about these memories, I should have said that there were certain street names, certain mental images of obscure London, which made me wretched as often as they came before me; but, in truth, it is a very long time since I was moved to any sort of bitterness by that retrospect of things hard and squalid. Now, owning all the misery of it in comparison with what should have been, I find that part of life interesting and pleasant to look back upon—greatly more so than many subsequent times, when I lived amid decencies and had enough to eat. Some day I will go to London, and spend a day or two amid the dear old horrors. Some of the places, I know, have disappeared. I see the winding way by which I went from Oxford Street, at the foot of Tottenham Court Road, to Leicester Square, and, somewhere in the labyrinth (I think of it as always foggy and gas-lit), was a shop which had pies and puddings in the window, puddings and pies kept hot by steam rising through perforated metal. How many a time have I stood there, raging with hunger, unable to purchase even one penny-worth of food! The shop and the street have long since vanished; does any man remember them so feelingly as I? But I think most of my haunts are still in existence. To tread again

those pavements, to look at those grimy doorways and purblind windows, would affect me strangely.

I see that alley hidden on the west side of Tottenham Court Road, where, after living in a back bedroom on the top floor, I had to exchange for the front cellar; there was a difference, if I remember rightly, of sixpence a week, and sixpence, in those days, was a very great consideration—why, it meant a couple of meals. (I once *found* sixpence in the street, and had an exultation which is vivid in me at this moment.) The front cellar was stone-floored; its furniture was a table, a chair, a wash-stand, and a bed; the window, which of course had never been cleaned since it was put in, received light through a flat grating in the alley above. Here I lived; here I wrote. Yes, “literary work” was done at that filthy deal table, on which, by the by, lay my Homer, my Shakespeare, and the few other books I then possessed. At night, as I lay in bed, I used to hear the tramp, tramp of a *posse* of policemen who passed along the alley on their way to relieve guard; their heavy feet sometimes sounded on the grating above my window.

I recall a tragi-comical incident of life at the British Museum. Once, on going down into the lavatory to wash my hands, I became aware of a notice newly set up above the row of basins. It ran somehow thus: “Readers are requested to bear in mind that these basins are to be used only for casual ablutions.” Oh, the significance of that inscription! Had I not myself, more than once, been glad to use this soap and water more largely than the sense of the authorities contemplated? And there were poor fellows working under the great dome whose need, in this respect, was greater than mine. I laughed heartily at the notice, but it meant so much.

Some of my abodes I have utterly forgotten. For one reason or another, I was always moving—an easy matter when all my possessions lay in one small trunk. Sometimes the people of the house were intolerable. In those days I was not fastidious, and I seldom had any but the slightest intercourse with those who dwelt under the same roof, yet it happened now and then that I was driven away by human proximity which passed my endurance. In other cases I had

to flee from pestilential conditions. How I escaped mortal illness in some of those places (miserably fed as I always was, and always over-working myself) is a great mystery. The worst that befell me was a slight attack of diphtheria—traceable, I imagine, to the existence of a dust-bin *under the staircase*. When I spoke of the matter to my landlady, she was at first astonished, then wrathful, and my departure was expedited with many insults.

On the whole, however, I had nothing much to complain of except my poverty. You cannot expect great comfort in London for four-and-six-pence a week—the most I ever could pay for a “furnished room with attendance” in those days of pretty stern apprenticeship. And I was easily satisfied; I wanted only a little walled space in which I could seclude myself, free from external annoyance. Certain comforts of civilized life I ceased even to regret; a stair-carpet I regarded as rather extravagant, and a carpet on the floor of my room was luxury undreamt of. My sleep was sound; I have passed nights of dreamless repose on beds which it would now make my bones ache only to look at. A door that locked, a fire in winter, a pipe of tobacco—these were things essential; and, granted these, I have been often richly contented in the squalidest garret. One such lodging is often in my memory; it was at Islington, not far from the City Road; my window looked upon the Regent’s Canal. As often as I think of it, I recall what was perhaps the worst London fog I ever knew; for three successive days, at least, my lamp had to be kept burning; when I looked through the window, I saw, at moments, a few blurred lights in the street beyond the Canal, but for the most part nothing but a yellowish darkness, which caused the glass to reflect the firelight and my own face. Did I feel miserable? Not a bit of it. The enveloping gloom seemed to make my chimney-corner only the more cosy. I had coals, oil, tobacco in sufficient quantity; I had a book to read; I had work which interested me; so I went forth only to get my meals at a City Road coffee-shop, and hastened back to the fireside. Oh, my ambitions, my hopes! How surprised and indignant I should have felt had I known of anyone who pitied me!

Nature took revenge now and then. In



winter time I had fierce sore throats, sometimes accompanied by long and savage headaches. Doctoring, of course, never occurred to me; I just locked my door, and, if I felt very bad indeed, went to bed—to lie there, without food or drink, till I was able to look after myself again. I could never ask from a landlady anything which was not in our bond, and only once or twice did I receive spontaneous offer of help. Oh, it is wonderful to think of all that youth can endure! What a poor feeble wretch I now seem to myself, when I remember thirty years ago!

## XII

AS OFTEN as I survey my bookshelves I am reminded of Lamb's "ragged veterans."<sup>1</sup> Not that all my volumes came from the second-hand stall; many of them were neat enough in new covers; some were even stately in fragrant bindings, when they passed into my hands. But so often have I removed, so rough has been the treatment of my little library at each change of place, and, to tell the truth, so little care have I given to its well-being at normal times (for in all practical matters I am idle and inept), that even the comeliest of my books show the results of unfair usage. More than one has been foully injured by a great nail driven into a packing-case—this but the extreme instance of the wrongs they have undergone. Now that I have leisure and peace of mind, I find myself growing more careful—an illustration of the great truth that virtue is made easy by circumstance. But I confess that, so long as a volume holds together, I am not much troubled as to its outer appearance.

I know men who say they had as lief read any book in a library copy as in one from their own shelf. To me that is unintelligible. For one thing, I know every book of mine by its *scent*, and I have but to put my nose between the pages to be reminded of all sorts of things. My Gibbon, for example, my well-bound eight-volume Milman edition, which I have

read and read and read again for more than thirty years—never do I open it but the scent of the noble page restores to me all the exultant happiness of that moment when I received it as a prize. Or my Shakespeare, the Great Cambridge Shakespeare—it has an odor which carries me yet further back in life; for these volumes belonged to my father, and before I was old enough to read them with understanding, it was often permitted me, as a treat, to take down one of them from the bookcase, and reverently to turn the leaves. The volumes smell exactly as they did in that old time, and what a strange tenderness comes upon me when I hold one of them in hand.

For that reason I do not often read Shakespeare in this edition. My eyes being good as ever, I take the Globe volume, which I bought in days when such a purchase was something more than an extravagance; wherefore I regard the book with that peculiar affection which results from sacrifice.

Sacrifice—in no drawing-room sense of the word. Dozens of my books were purchased with money which ought to have been spent upon what are called the necessities of life. Many a time I have stood before a stall, or a bookseller's window, torn by conflict of intellectual desire and bodily need. At the very hour of dinner, when my stomach clamored for food, I have been stopped by sight of a volume so long coveted, and marked at so advantageous a price, that I *could* not let it go; yet to buy it meant pangs of famine. My Heyne's *Tibullus* was grasped at such a moment. It lay on the stall of the old book-shop in Goodge Street—a stall where now and then one found an excellent thing among quantities of rubbish. Sixpence was the price—sixpence! At that time I used to eat my midday meal (of course my dinner) at a coffee-shop in Oxford Street, one of the real old coffee-shops, such as now, I suppose, can hardly be found. Sixpence was all I had—yes, all I had in the world; it would purchase a plate of meat and vegetables. But I did not dare to hope that the *Tibullus* would wait until the morrow, when a certain small sum fell due to me. I paced the pavement, fingering the coppers in my pocket, eyeing the stall, two appetites at combat within me. The book was bought and I went home with it, and as I made a dinner of bread and butter I gloated over the pages. \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup>In a letter to his brother written on 5 August, 1885, Gissing remarked: "I am reading Crabb Robinson's *Reminiscences*, a book you would enjoy. It abounds in stories regarding Coleridge, Lamb, Wordsworth, etc. Lamb he was specially intimate with. There is one entry 'Looked over Lamb's library in part. He has the finest collection of shabby books I ever saw; such a number of first-rate books in very bad condition is, I think, nowhere to be found.'"

## XXII

WERE one to look at the literary journals only, and thereafter judge of the time, it would be easy to persuade oneself that civilization had indeed made great and solid progress, and that the world stood at a very hopeful stage of enlightenment. Week after week, I glance over these pages of crowded advertisement; I see a great many publishing-houses zealously active in putting forth every kind of book, new and old; I see names innumerable of workers in every branch of literature. Much that is announced declares itself at once of merely ephemeral import, or even of no import at all; but what masses of print which invite the attention of thoughtful or studious folk! To the multitude is offered a long succession of classic authors, in beautiful form, at a minimum cost; never were such treasures so cheaply and so gracefully set before all who can prize them. For the wealthy, there are volumes magnificent; lordly editions; works of art whereon have been lavished care and skill and expense incalculable. Here is exhibited the learning of the whole world and of all the ages; be a man's study what it will, in these columns, at one time or another he shall find that which appeals to him. Here are labors of the erudite, exercised on every subject that falls within learning's scope. Science brings forth its newest discoveries in earth and heaven; it speaks to the philosopher in his solitude, and to the crowd in the market-place. Curious pursuits of the mind at leisure are represented in publications numberless; trifles and oddities of intellectual savor; gatherings from every by-way of human interest. For other moods there are the fabulists; to tell truth, they commonly hold the place of honor in these varied lists. Who shall count them? Who shall calculate their readers? Builders of verse are many; yet the observer will note that contemporary poets have but an inconspicuous standing in this index of the public taste. Travel, on the other hand, is largely represented; the general appetite for information about lands remote would appear to be only less keen than for the adventures of romance.

With these pages before one's eyes, must one not needs believe that things of the mind are a prime concern of our day? Who are the purchasers of these volumes ever pouring

from the press? How is it possible for so great a commerce to flourish save as a consequence of national eagerness in this intellectual domain? Surely one must take for granted that throughout the land, in town and country, private libraries are growing apace; that by the people at large a great deal of time is devoted to reading; that literary ambition is one of the commonest spurs to effort?

It is the truth. All this may be said of contemporary England. But is it enough to set one's mind at ease regarding the outlook of our civilization?

Two things must be remembered. However considerable this literary traffic, regarded by itself, it is relatively of small extent. And, in the second place, literary activity is by no means an invariable proof of that mental attitude which marks the truly civilized man.

Lay aside the "literary organ," which appears once a week, and take up the newspaper, which comes forth every day, morning and evening. Here you get the true proportion of things. Read your daily news-sheet—that which costs threepence or that which costs a halfpenny—and muse upon the impression it leaves. It may be that a few books are "noticed"; granting that the "notice" is in any way noticeable, compare the space it occupies with that devoted to the material interests of life: you have a gauge of the real importance of intellectual endeavor to the people at large. No, the public which reads, in any sense of the word worth considering is very, very small; the public which would feel no lack if all book-printing ceased to-morrow, is enormous. These announcements of learned works which strike one as so encouraging, are addressed, as a matter of fact, to a few thousand persons, scattered all over the English-speaking world. Many of the most valuable books slowly achieve the sale of a few hundred copies. Gather from all the ends of the British Empire the men and women who purchase grave literature as a matter of course, who habitually seek it in public libraries, in short, who regard it as a necessity of life, and I am much mistaken if they could not comfortably assemble in the Albert Hall.

But even granting this, is it not an obvious fact that our age tends to the civilized habit of mind, as displayed in a love for intellectual things? Was there ever a time which saw the

literature of knowledge and of the emotions so widely distributed? Does not the minority of the truly intelligent exercise a vast and profound influence? Does it not in truth lead the way, however slowly and irregularly the multitude may follow?

I should like to believe it. When gloomy evidence is thrust upon me, I often say to myself: Think of the frequency of the reasonable man; think of him everywhere laboring to spread the light; how is it possible that such efforts should be overborne by forces of blind brutality, now that the human race has got so far? Yes, yes; but this mortal whom I caress as reasonable, as enlightened and enlightening, this author, investigator, lecturer, or studious gentleman, to whose coat-tails I cling, does he always represent justice and peace, sweetness of manners, purity of life—all the things which make for true civilization? Here is a fallacy of bookish thought. Experience offers proof on every hand that vigorous mental life may be but one side of a personality, of which the other is moral barbarism. A man may be a fine archæologist, and yet have no sympathy with human ideals. The historian, the biographer, even the poet, may be a money-market gambler, a social toady, a clamorous Chauvinist, or an unscrupulous wire-puller. As for "leaders of science," what optimist will dare to proclaim them on the side of the gentle virtues? And if one must needs think in this way of those who stand forth, professed instructors and inspirers, what of those who merely listen? The reading-public—oh, the reading-public! Hardly will a prudent statistician venture to declare that one in every score of those who actually read sterling books do so with comprehension of their author. These dainty series of noble and delightful works, which have so seemingly wide an acceptance, think you they vouch for true appreciation in all who buy them? Remember those who purchase to follow the fashion, to impose upon their neighbor, or even to flatter themselves; think of those who wish to make cheap presents, and those who are merely pleased by the outer aspect of the volume. Above all, bear in mind that busy throng whose zeal is according neither to knowledge nor to conviction—the host of the half-educated, characteristic and peril of our time. They, indeed, purchase and purchase largely. Heaven for-

bid that I should not recognize the few among them whose bent of brain and of conscience justifies their fervor; to such—the ten in ten thousand—be all aid and brotherly solace! But the glib many, the perky mispronouncers of titles and of authors' names, the twanging murderers of rhythm, the maulers of the uncut edge at sixpence extra, the ready-reckoners of bibliopolic discount—am I to see in these a witness of my hope for the century to come?

I am told that their semi-education will be integrated. We are in a transition stage, between the bad old time when only a few had academic privileges, and that happy future which will see all men liberally instructed. Unfortunately for this argument, education is a thing of which only the few are capable; teach as you will only a small percentage will profit by your most zealous energy. On an ungenerous soil it is vain to look for rich crops. Your average mortal will be your average mortal still, and if he grow conscious of power, if he becomes vocal and self-assertive, if he get into his hands all the material resources of the country, why, you have a state of things such as at present looms menacingly before every Englishman blessed—or cursed—with an unpopular spirit.

## SUMMER

### II

I HAVE been spending a week in Somerset. The right June weather put me in the mind for rambling, and my thoughts turned to the Severn Sea. I went to Glastonbury and Wells, and on to Cheddar, and so to the shore of the Channel at Clevedon, remembering my holiday of fifteen years ago, and too often losing myself in a contrast of the man I was then and what I am now. Beautiful beyond all words of description that nook of oldest England; but that I feared the moist and misty winter climate, I should have chosen some spot below the Mendips for my home and resting-place. Unspeakable the charm to my ear of those old names; exquisite the quiet of those little towns, lost amid tilth and pasture, untouched as yet by the fury of modern life, their ancient sanctuaries guarded, as it were, by noble trees and hedges overrun with flowers. In all England there is no



sweeter and more varied prospect than that from the hill of the Holy Thorn at Glastonbury; in all England there is no lovelier musing place than the leafy walk beside the Palace Moat at Wells. As I think of the golden hours I spent there, a passion to which I can give no name takes hold upon me: my heart trembles with an indefinable ecstasy.

There was a time of my life when I was consumed with a desire for foreign travel; an impatience of everything familiar fretted me through all the changing year. If I had not at length found the opportunity to escape, if I had not seen the landscapes for which my soul longed, I think I must have moped to death. Few men, assuredly, have enjoyed such wanderings more than I, and few men revive them in memory with a richer delight or deeper longing. But—whatever temptation comes to me in mellow autumn, when I think of the grape and of the olive—I do not believe I shall ever again cross the sea. What remains to me of life and of energy is far too little for the enjoyment of all I know, and all I wish to know, of this dear island.

As a child I used to sleep in a room hung round with prints after English landscape painters—those steel engravings so common half a century ago, which bore the legend, "From the picture in the Vernon Gallery." Far more than I knew at the time, these pictures impressed me; I gazed and gazed at them with that fixed attention of a child which is half curiosity, half reverie, till every line of them was fixed in my mind. At this moment I see the black-and-white landscapes as if they were hanging on the wall before me, and I have often thought that this early training of the imagination—for such it was—has much to do with the passionate love of rural scenery which lurked within me even when I did not recognize it, and which now for many a year has been one of the emotions directing my life. Perhaps, too, that early memory explains why I love a good black-and-white print even more than a good painting. And—to draw yet another inference—here may be a reason for the fact that, through my youth and early manhood, I found more pleasure in Nature as represented by art than in Nature herself. Even during that strange time when hardships and passions held me captive far from any glimpse of the flowering earth, I could be moved, and moved deeply, by a

picture of the simplest rustic scene. At rare moments, when a happy chance led me into the National Gallery, I used to stand long before such pictures as "The Valley Farm," "The Cornfield," "Mousehold Heath." In the murk confusion of my heart these visions of the world of peace and beauty from which I was excluded—to which, indeed, I hardly ever gave a thought—touched me to deep emotion. But it did not need—nor does it now—the magic of a master to awake that mood in me. Let me but come upon the poorest little woodcut, the cheapest "process" illustration, representing a thatched cottage, a lane, a field, and I hear that music begin to murmur. It is a passion—Heaven be thanked—that grows with my advancing years. The last thought of my brain as I lie dying will be that of sunshine upon an English meadow.

## VI

Or how many dwellings can it be said that no word of anger is ever heard beneath its roof, and that no unkindly feeling ever exists between the inmates? Most men's experience would seem to justify them in declaring that, throughout the inhabited world, no such house exists. I, knowing at all events of one, admit the possibility that there may be more; yet I feel that it is to hazard a conjecture; I cannot point with certainty to any other instance, nor in all my secular life (I speak as one who has quitted the world) could I have named a single example.

It is so difficult for human beings to live together; nay, it is so difficult for them to associate, however transitorily, and even under the most favorable conditions, without some shadow of mutual offense. Consider the differences of task and of habit, the conflict of prejudices, the divergence of opinions (though that is probably the same thing), which quickly reveal themselves between any two persons brought into more than casual contact, and think how much self-subdual is implicit whenever, for more than an hour or two, they co-exist in seeming harmony. Man is not made for peaceful intercourse with his fellows; he is by nature self-assertive, commonly aggressive, always critical in a more or less hostile spirit of any characteristic which seems strange to him. That he is capable of profound affections merely modifies

here and there his natural contentiousness, and subdues its expression. Even love, in the largest and purest sense of the word, is no safeguard against perilous irritation and sensibilities inborn. And what were the durability of love without the powerful alliance of habit?

Suppose yourself endowed with such power of hearing that all the talk going on at any moment beneath the domestic roofs of any town became clearly audible to you; the dominant note would be that of moods, tempers, opinions at jar. Who but the most amiable dreamer can doubt it? This, mind you, is not the same thing as saying that angry emotion is the ruling force in human life; the facts of our civilization prove the contrary. Just because, and only because, the natural spirit of conflict finds such frequent scope, does human society hold together, and, on the whole, present a pacific aspect. In the course of ages (one would like to know how many) man has attained a remarkable degree of self-control; dire experience has forced upon him the necessity of compromise, and habit has inclined him (the individual) to prefer a quiet, orderly life. But by instinct he is still a quarrelsome creature, and he gives vent to the impulse as far as it is compatible with his reasoned interests—often, to be sure, without regard for that limit. The average man or woman is always at open discord with some one; the great majority could not live without oft-recurrent squabble. Speak in confidence with anyone you like, and get him to tell you how many cases of coldness, alienation, or downright enmity, between friends and kinsfolk, his memory registers. The number will be considerable, and what a vastly greater number of everyday “misunderstandings” may be thence inferred! Verbal contention is, of course, commoner among the poor and the vulgar than in the class of well-bred people living at their ease, but I doubt whether the lower ranks of society find personal association much more difficult than the refined minority above them. High cultivation may help to self-command, but it multiplies the chances of irritative contact. In mansion, as in hovel, the strain of life is perpetually felt—between the married, between parents and children, between relatives of every degree, between employers and employed. They debate,

they dispute, they wrangle, they explode—then nerves are relieved, and they are ready to begin over again. Quit the home and quarreling is less obvious, but it goes on all about one. What proportion of the letters delivered any morning would be found to be written in displeasure, in petulance, in wrath? The postbag shrieks insults or bursts with suppressed malice. Is it not wonderful—nay, is it not the marvel of marvels—that human life has reached such a high point of public and private organization?

And gentle idealists utter their indignant wonder at the continuance of war! Why, it passes the wit of man to explain how it is that nations are ever at peace! For, if only by the rarest good fortune do individuals associate harmoniously, there would seem to be much less likelihood of mutual understanding and good-will between the peoples of alien lands. As a matter of fact, no two nations are ever friendly, in the sense of truly liking each other; with the reciprocal criticism of countries there always mingles a sentiment of animosity. The original meaning of *hostis* is merely stranger, and a stranger who is likewise a foreigner will only by curious exception fail to stir antipathy in the average human being. Add to this that a great number of persons in every country find their delight and their business in exasperating international disrelish, and with what vestige of common sense can one feel surprise that war is ceaselessly talked of, often enough declared. In days gone by, distance and rarity of communication assured peace between many realms. Now that every country is in proximity to every other, what need is there to elaborate explanations of the distrust, the fear, the hatred, which are a perpetual theme of journalists and statesmen? By approximation, all countries have entered the sphere of natural quarrel. That they find plenty of things to quarrel about is no cause for astonishment. A hundred years hence there will be some possibility of perceiving whether international relations are likely to obey the law which has acted with such beneficence in the life of each civilized people; whether this country and that will be content to ease their tempers with bloodless squabbling, subduing the more violent promptings for the common good. Yet I suspect that a century is a very short time to allow for even justifiable surmise of such an

outcome. If by any chance newspapers ceased to exist. . . .

Talk of war, and one gets involved in such utopian musings!

## XV

I HAVE been at the seaside—enjoying it, yes, but in what a doddering, senile sort of way! Is it I who used to drink the strong wind like wine, who ran exultingly along the wet sands and leaped from rock to rock, barefoot, on the slippery seaweed, who breasted the swelling breaker, and shouted with joy as it buried me in gleaming foam? At the seaside I knew no such thing as bad weather; there were but changes of eager mood and full-blooded life. Now, if the breeze blow too roughly, if there come a pelting shower, I must look for shelter, and sit with my cloak about me. It is but a new reminder that I do best to stay at home, traveling only in reminiscence.

At Weymouth I enjoyed a hearty laugh, one of the good things not easy to get after middle age. There was a notice of steamboats which ply along the coast, steamboats recommended to the public as being "*replete with lavatories and a ladies' saloon.*" Think how many people read this without a chuckle!

## XXI

AT AN inn in the north I once heard three men talking at their breakfast on the question of diet. They agreed that most people ate too much meat, and one of them went so far as to declare that, for his part, he rather preferred vegetables and fruit. "Why," he said, "will you believe me that I sometimes make a breakfast of apples?" This announcement was received in silence; evidently the two listeners didn't quite know what to think of it. Thereupon the speaker, in rather a blustering tone, cried out, "Yes, I can make a very good breakfast on *two or three pounds of apples.*"

Wasn't it amusing? And wasn't it characteristic? This honest Briton had gone too far in frankness. 'Tis all very well to like vegetables and fruits up to a certain point; but to breakfast on apples! His companions' silence proved that they were just a little ashamed of him; his confession savored of

poverty or meanness; to right himself in their opinion, nothing better occurred to the man than to protest that he ate apples, yes, but not merely one or two; he ate them largely, *by the pound!* I laughed at the fellow, but I thoroughly understood him; so would every Englishman; for at the root of our being is a hatred of parsimony. This manifests itself in all sorts of ludicrous or contemptible forms, but no less is it the source of our finest qualities. An Englishman desires, above all, to live largely; on that account he not only dreads, but hates and despises, poverty. His virtues are those of the free-handed and warm-hearted opulent man; his weaknesses come of the sense of inferiority (intensely painful and humiliating) which attaches in his mind to one who cannot spend and give; his vices, for the most part, originate in loss of self-respect due to loss of secure position.

## AUTUMN

### XV

BLACKBERRIES hanging thick upon the hedge bring to my memory something of long ago. I had somehow escaped into the country, and on a long walk began to feel mid-day hunger. The wayside brambles were fruiting; I picked and ate, and ate on, until I had come within sight of an inn where I might have made a meal. But my hunger was satisfied; I had no need of anything more, and, as I thought of it, a strange feeling of surprise, a sort of bewilderment, came upon me. What! Could it be that I had eaten, and eaten sufficiently, *without paying?* It struck me as an extraordinary thing. At that time, my ceaseless preoccupation was how to obtain money to keep myself alive. Many a day I had suffered hunger because I durst not spend the few coins I possessed; the food I could buy was in any case unsatisfactory, unvaried. But here Nature had given me a feast, which seemed delicious, and I had eaten all I wanted. The wonder held me for a long time, and to this day I can recall it, understand it.

I think there could be no better illustration of what it means to be very poor in a great town. And I am glad to have been through it. To those days of misery I owe much of the contentment which I now enjoy; not by mere force of contrast, but because I have been bet-



ter taught than most men the facts which condition our day-to-day existence. To the ordinary educated person, freedom from anxiety as to how he shall merely be fed and clothed is a matter of course; questioned, he would admit it to be an agreeable state of things, but it is no more a source of conscious joy to him than physical health to the thoroughly sound man. For me, were I to live another fifty years, this security would be a delightful surprise renewed with every renewal of day. I know, as only one with my experience can, all that is involved in the possession of means to live. The average educated man has never stood alone, utterly alone, just clad and nothing more than that, with the problem before him of wresting his next meal from a world that cares not whether he live or die. There is no such school of political economy. Go through that, course of lectures, and you will never again become confused as to the meaning of elementary terms in that sorry science.

I understand, far better than most men, what I owe to the labor of others. This money which I "draw" at the four quarters of the year, in a sense falls to me from heaven; but I know very well that every drachm is sweated from human pores. Not, thank goodness, with the declared tyranny of basest capitalism; I mean only that it is the product of human labor; perhaps wholesome, but none the less compulsory. Look far enough, and it means muscular toil, that swinking of the ruder man which supports all the complex structure of our life. When I think of him thus, the man of the people earns my gratitude. That it is gratitude from afar, that I never was, and never shall be, capable of democratic fervor, is a characteristic of my mind which I long ago accepted as final. I have known revolt against the privilege of wealth (can I not remember spots in London where I have stood, savage with misery, looking at the prosperous folk who passed?), but I can never feel myself at one with the native poor among whom I dwelt. And for the simplest reason: I came to know them too well. He who cultivates his enthusiasm amid graces and comforts may nourish an illusion with regard to the world below him all his life long, and I do not deny that he may be the better for it; for me, no illusion was possible. I knew the poor, and I knew that their aims

were not mine. I knew that the kind of life (such a modest life!) which I should have accepted as little short of the ideal, would have been to them—if they could have been made to understand it—a weariness and a contempt. To ally myself with them against the "upper world" would have been mere dishonesty, or sheer despair. What they at heart desired, was to me barren; what I coveted, was to them for ever incomprehensible.

That my own aim indicated an ideal which is the best for all to pursue, I am far from maintaining. It may be so, or not; I have long known the idleness of advocating reform on a basis of personal predilection. Enough to set my own thoughts in order, without seeking to devise a new economy for the world. But it is much to see clearly from one's point of view, and therein the evil days I have treasured are of no little help to me. If my knowledge be only *subjective*, why, it only concerns myself; I preach to no one. Upon another man, of origin and education like to mine, a like experience of hardship might have a totally different effect; he might identify himself with the poor, burn to the end of his life with the noblest humanitarianism. I should no further criticize him than to say that he saw with other eyes than mine. A vision, perhaps, larger and more just. But in one respect he resembles me. If ever such a man arises, let him be questioned; it will be found that he once made a meal of blackberries—and mused upon it.

## WINTER

### VI

ONE of the shining moments of my day is that when, having returned a little weary from an afternoon walk, I exchange boots for slippers, out-of-doors coat for easy, familiar, shabby jacket, and, in my deep, soft-elbowed chair, await the tea-tray. Perhaps it is while drinking tea that I most of all enjoy the sense of leisure. In days gone by, I could but gulp down the refreshment, hurried, often harassed, by the thought of the work I had before me; often I was quite insensible of the aroma, the flavor, of what I drank. Now, how delicious is the soft yet penetrating odor which floats into my study, with the appearance of the teapot! What solace in the first cup,

what deliberate sipping of that which follows! What a glow does it bring after a walk in chilly rain! The while, I look around at my books and pictures, tasting the happiness of their tranquil possession. I cast an eye 5 towards my pipe; perhaps I prepare it, with seeming thoughtfulness, for the reception of tobacco. And never, surely, is tobacco more soothing, more suggestive of humane thoughts than when it comes just after tea—itself a 10 bland inspirer.

In nothing is the English genius of domesticity more notably declared than in the institution of this festival—almost one may call it so—of afternoon tea. Beneath simple 15 roofs, the hour of tea has something in it of sacred; for it marks the end of domestic work and worry, the beginning of restful, sociable evening. The mere chink of cups and saucers tunes the mind to happy repose. I 20 care nothing for your five o'clock tea of modish drawing-rooms, idle and wearisome like all else in which that world has part; I speak of tea where one is *at home* in quite another than the worldly sense. To admit 25 mere strangers to your tea-table is profanation; on the other hand, English hospitality has here its kindest aspect; never is friend more welcome than when he drops in for a cup of tea. Where tea is really a meal, with nothing 30 between it and nine o'clock supper, it is—again in the true sense—the *hottest* meal of the day. Is it believable that the Chinese, in who knows how many centuries, have derived from tea a millionth part of the pleasure or the 35 good which it has brought to England in the past one hundred years?

I like to look at my housekeeper when she carries in the tray. Her mien is festal, yet in her smile there is a certain gravity, as 40 though she performed an office which honored her. She has dressed for the evening; that is to say, her clean and seemly attire of working hours is exchanged for garments suitable to fireside leisure; her cheeks are warm, for she 45 has been making fragrant toast. Quickly her eye glances about my room, but only to have the pleasure of noting that all is in order; inconceivable that anything serious should need doing at this hour of the day. She brings the 50 little table within the glow of the hearth, so that I can help myself without changing my easy position. If she speaks, it will only be a pleasant word or two; should she have anything

important to say, the moment will be *after* tea, not before it; this she knows by instinct. Perchance she may just stoop to sweep back a cinder which has fallen since, in my absence, she looked after the fire; it is done quickly and silently. Then, still smiling, she withdraws, and I know that she is going to enjoy her own tea, her own toast, in the warm, comfortable, sweet-smelling kitchen.

## VII

ONE has heard much condemnation of the English kitchen. Our typical cook is spoken of as a gross, unimaginative creature, capable 5 only of roasting or seething. Our table is said to be such as would weary or revolt any but gobbet-bolting carnivores. We are told that our bread is the worst in Europe, an indigestible paste; that our vegetables are diet 10 rather for the hungry animal than for discriminative man; that our warm beverages, called coffee and tea, are so carelessly or ignorantly brewed that they preserve no 15 simple virtue of the drink as it is known in other lands. To be sure, there is no lack of evidence to explain such censure. The class which provides our servants is undeniably 20 coarse and stupid, and its handiwork of every kind too often bears the native stamp. For all that, English victuals are, in quality, the best in the world, and English cookery is the wholesomest and the most appetizing known 25 to any temperate clime.

As in so many other of our good points, we have achieved this thing unconsciously. Your ordinary Englishwoman engaged in 30 cooking probably has no other thought than to make the food masticable; but reflect on the results, when the thing is well done, and there appears a culinary principle. Nothing 35 could be simpler, yet nothing more right and reasonable. The aim of English cooking is so to deal with the raw material of man's nourishment as to bring out, for the healthy 40 palate, all its natural juices and savors. And in this, when the cook has any measure of natural or acquired skill, we most notably succeed. Our beef is veritably beef; at its best, 45 such beef as can be eaten in no other country under the sun; our mutton is mutton in its purest essence—think of a shoulder of South-down at the moment when the first jet of 50 gravy starts under the carving knife! Each of



our vegetables yields its separate and characteristic sweetness. It never occurs to us to disguise the genuine flavor of food; if such a process be necessary, then something is wrong with the food itself. Some wiseacre scoffed at us as the people with only one sauce. The fact is, we have as many sauces as we have kinds of meat; each, in the process of cookery, yields its native sap, and this is the best of all sauces conceivable. Only English folk know what is meant by *gravy*; consequently, the English alone are competent to speak on the question of sauce.

To be sure, this culinary principle presupposes food of the finest quality. If your beef and your mutton have flavors scarcely distinguishable, whilst both this and that might conceivably be veal, you will go to work in quite a different way; your object must then be to disguise, to counterfeit, to add an alien relish—in short, to do anything *except* insist upon the natural quality of the viand. Happily, the English have never been driven to these expedients. Be it flesh, fowl, or fish, each comes to table so distinctly and eminently itself that by no possibility could it be confused with anything else. Give your average cook a bit of cod, and tell her to dress it in her own way. The good creature will carefully boil it, and there an end of the matter; and by no exercise of art could she have so treated the fish as to make more manifest and enjoyable that special savor which heaven has bestowed upon cod. Think of our array of joints; how royal is each in its own way, and how utterly unlike any of the others. Picture a boiled leg of mutton. It is mutton, yes, and mutton of the best; nature has bestowed upon man no sweeter morsel; but the same joint roasted is mutton, too, and how divinely different! The point is that these differences are natural; that, in eliciting them, we obey the eternal law of things, and no human caprice. Your artificial relish is here not only needless, but offensive.

In the case of veal, we demand “stuffing.” Yes, for veal is a somewhat insipid meat, and by experience we have discovered the best method of throwing into relief such inherent goodness as it has. The stuffing does not disguise, nor seek to disguise; it accentuates. Good veal stuffing—reflect!—is in itself a triumph of culinary instinct; so bland it is, and yet so powerful upon the gastric juices.

Did I call veal insipid? I must add that it is only so in comparison with English beef and mutton. When I think of the “brown” on the edge of a really fine cut of veal—!

### VIII

As so often when my thought has gone forth in praise of things English, I find myself tormented by an afterthought—the reflection that I have praised a time gone by. Now, in this matter of English meat. A newspaper tells me that English beef is non-existent; that the best meat bearing that name has merely been fed up in England for a short time before killing. Well, well; we can only be thankful that the quality is still so good. Real English mutton still exists, I suppose. It would surprise me if any other country could produce the shoulder I had yesterday.

Who knows? Perhaps even our own cookery has seen its best days. It is a lamentable fact that the multitude of English people nowadays never taste roasted meat; what they call by that name is baked in the oven—a totally different thing, though it may, I admit, be inferior only to the right roast. Oh, the sirloin of old times, the sirloin which I can remember, thirty or forty years ago! That was English, and no mistake, and all the history of civilization could show nothing on the table of mankind to equal it. To clap that joint into a steamy oven would have been a crime unpardonable by gods and man. Have I not with my own eyes seen it turning, turning on the spit? The scent it diffused was in itself a cure for dyspepsia.

It is very long since I tasted a slice of boiled beef; I have a suspicion that the thing is becoming rare. In a household such as mine, the “round” is impracticable; of necessity it must be large, altogether too large for our requirements. But what exquisite memories does my mind preserve! The very coloring of a round, how rich it is, yet how delicate, and how subtly varied! The odor is totally distinct from that of roast beef, and yet it is beef incontestable. Hot, of course with carrots, it is a dish for a king; but cold it is nobler. Oh, the thin broad slice, with just its fringe of consistent fat!

We are sparing of condiments, but such as we use are the best that man has invented. And we know *how* to use them. I have heard



an impatient innovator scoff at the English law on the subject of mustard, and demand why, in the nature of things, mustard should not be eaten with mutton. The answer is very simple; this law has been made by the English palate—which is impeccable. I maintain it is impeccable! Your educated Englishman is an infallible guide in all that relates to the table. “The man of superior intellect,” said Tennyson—justifying his love of boiled beef and new potatoes—“knows what is good to eat”; and I would extend it to all civilized natives of our country. We are content with nothing but the finest savors, the truest combinations; our wealth, and happy natural circumstances, have allowed us an education of the palate of which our natural aptitude was worthy. Think, by the bye, of those new potatoes, just mentioned. Our cook, when dressing them, puts into the saucepan a sprig of mint. This is genius. Not otherwise could the flavor of the vegetable be so perfectly, yet so delicately emphasized. The mint is there, and we know it; yet our palate knows only the young potato.

### XVIII

SOMEBODY has been making a speech, reported at a couple of columns' length in the paper. As I glance down the waste of print, one word catches my eye again and again. It's all about “science”—and therefore doesn't concern me.

I wonder whether there are many men who have the same feeling with regard to “science” as I have? It is something more than a prejudice; often it takes the form of a dread, almost a terror. Even those branches of science which are concerned with things that interest me—which deal with plants and animals and the heaven of stars—even these I cannot contemplate without uneasiness, a spiritual disaffection; new discoveries, new theories, however they engage my intelligence, soon weary me, and in some way depress. When it comes to other kinds of science—the sciences blatant and ubiquitous—the science by which men become million-

aires—I am possessed with an angry hostility, a resentful apprehension. This was born in me, no doubt; I cannot trace it to circumstances of my life, or to any particular moment of my mental growth. My boyish delight in Carlyle doubtless nourished the temper, but did not Carlyle so delight me because of what was already in my mind? I remember, as a lad, looking at complicated machinery with a shrinking uneasiness which, of course, I did not understand; I remember the sort of disturbed contemptuousness with which, in my time of “examinations,” I dismissed “science papers.” It is intelligible enough to me, now, that unformed fear: the ground of my antipathy has grown clear enough. I hate and fear “science” because of my conviction that, for long to come if not for ever, it will be the remorseless enemy of mankind. I see it destroying all simplicity and gentleness of life, all the beauty of the world; I see it restoring barbarism under a mask of civilization; I see it darkening men's minds and hardening their hearts; I see it bringing a time of vast conflicts, which will pale into insignificance “the thousand wars of old,” and, as likely as not, will whelm all the laborious advances of mankind in blood-drenched chaos.

Yet to rail against it is as idle as to quarrel with any other force of nature. For myself, I can hold apart, and see as little as possible of the thing I deem accursed. But I think of some who are dear to me, whose life will be lived in the hard and fierce new age. The roaring “Jubilee” of last summer was for me an occasion of sadness; it meant that so much was over and gone—so much of good and noble, the like of which the world will not see again, and that a new time, of which only the perils are clearly visible, is rushing upon us. Oh, the generous hopes and aspirations of forty years ago! Science, then, was seen as the deliverer; only a few could prophesy its tyranny, could foresee that it would revive old evils and trample on the promises of its beginning. This is the course of things; we must accept it. But it is some comfort to me that I—poor little mortal—have had no part in bringing the tyrant to his throne.

## THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)

Thomas Hardy was born in Dorsetshire, in the country, about three miles from Dorchester, on 2 June, 1840. He received his earlier education from his mother and from Dorchester schools. From 1856 until 1861 he was the pupil of an ecclesiastical architect of Dorchester, John Hicks. As a part of his work he sketched and measured many old country churches since pulled down or altered. During a portion of this period he also read Latin and Greek with a fellow-pupil and did other reading not related to his architectural studies. In 1862 he went to London and studied Gothic architecture under Sir A. Blomfield until 1867. During these years he also attended some classes at King's College. While his studies were being pursued to their completion there were already indications of the course which Hardy's life was actually to take, for he had begun to write verse as early as 1860, and he continued to do so throughout his years in London. In 1867 he moved from London to Weymouth, where he practiced his profession of architecture. It is said that a promising career was opening up before him, but that he early experienced a disillusionment the like of which a thoughtful man can hardly escape on entering any profession. He learned, as he says in *Desperate Remedies*, that "those who get rich need have no skill at all as artists.—What need they have?—A certain kind of energy which men with any fondness for art possess very seldom indeed—an earnestness in making acquaintances, and a love for using them. They give their whole attention to the art of dining out, after mastering a few rudimentary facts to serve up in conversation." Probably this discovery increased Hardy's determination to cultivate another mode of expression, and, finding no publisher for the verse he had written, he turned for a time to prose and wrote a novel. That novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, still exists in manuscript but has never been published. It was submitted to Chapman and Hall, and was rejected, with good advice, by their reader, George Meredith.

Fortunately Hardy, though he learned that it took "a judicious omission of your real thoughts to make a novel popular," proceeded to write *Desperate Remedies*, which was published, anonymously and at his own expense, in 1871. *Under the Greenwood Tree* or the *Mellstock Quire* was published, also anonymously, in 1872, and in the following year *A Pair of Blue Eyes* was published, over Hardy's name. This novel was

successful enough to warrant his abandonment of architecture, and after 1873 his time was given entirely to literature. In 1885 he built the house on the outskirts of Dorchester, Max Gate, which remained his home until his death on 11 January, 1928. Immediately after his death conflicting demands were made concerning the disposition of the remains, which necessitated a compromise. His heart was taken out and placed in the grave of his first wife, in Stinsford churchyard, while the rest of the body was cremated and buried in the poets' corner in Westminster Abbey. His novels, in addition to those already mentioned, are: *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Trumpet-Major* (1879), *A Laodicean* (1881), *Two on a Tower* (1882), *The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge* (1885), *The Woodlanders* (1887), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895), and *The Well-Beloved* (1897). Hardy also published several volumes of tales. His first volume of verse, *Wessex Poems*, written from 1865 onwards, was published in 1898. Other volumes are: *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1901), *The Dynasts*, an epic-drama of the war with Napoleon (1903-1908), *Time's Laughing-Stocks and Other Verses* (1909), *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), *Moments of Vision* (1917), *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922), *The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall at Tintagel in Lyonesse* (1923), *Human Shows; Far Phantasies; Songs, and Trifles* (1925), and *Winter Words in Various Moods and Meters* (1928).

Although some of Hardy's novels and poems have been bitterly criticized both for their frankness of speech and for the pessimistic outlook on life which they exhibit, still, their author's pre-eminent position in English literature of the last half-century was long ago universally acknowledged, and Hardy's old age was full of many distinguished testimonies to his greatness of achievement. One of these was the Order of Merit, bestowed on him in 1910. As for Hardy's frankness, or truthfulness in speaking of things as they are, the time came some years ago when this began to be recognized as something to commend. But concerning his pessimism questions may long remain. They arise not from the fact that Hardy depicted life as a frustration of man's higher aims and nobler qualities, for this tragic fact is the theme of much of the world's greatest literature. But the questions arise because of the peculiar character of Hardy's view, which

seems to rob us of our very humanity. His outlook, in truth, was determined by the scientific thought dominant in the latter half of the nineteenth century, or was at least in full consonance with it. According to the view of science man was merely a complex mechanism, tossed into the air like a bubble by accident, and there the helpless victim of forces which he could neither understand nor control. This view of life Hardy

tempered with certain inconsistencies inevitable in lifting it from the region of abstract theory to the concrete portrayal of recognizable human beings, and this is fortunate; for Hardy was a born tragic artist and the master of an austere style appropriate to this high theme, whereas, of course, on a basis of mechanistic determinism life loses even its tragedy in the abyss of illusion which is the sole stuff of consciousness.

### HAP<sup>1</sup>

IF BUT some vengeful god would call to me  
From up the sky, and laugh: "Thou suffering  
thing,

Know that thy sorrow is my ecstasy,  
That thy love's loss is my hate's profiting!"

Then would I bear it, clench myself, and die, 5  
Steeled by the sense of ire unmerited;  
Half-eased in that a Powerfuller than I  
Had willed and meted me the tears I shed.

But not so. How arrives it joy lies slain,  
And why unblooms the best hope ever sown?  
—Crass Casualty obstructs the sun and rain,  
And dicing Time for gladness casts a  
moan. 12

These purblind Doomsters had as readily  
strown  
Blisses about my pilgrimage as pain.

### HER DEATH AND AFTER

THE summons was urgent: and forth I went—  
By the way of the Western Wall, so drear  
On that winter night, and sought a gate,  
Where one, by Fate,  
Lay dying that I held dear. 5

And there, as I paused by her tenement,  
And the trees shed on me their rime and hoar,  
I thought of the man who had left her lone—  
Him who made her his own  
When I loved her, long before. 10

The rooms within had the piteous shine  
That home-things wear when there's aught  
amiss;

From the stairway floated the rise and fall  
Of an infant's call,  
Whose birth had brought her to this. 15

Her life was the price she would pay for that  
wine—  
For a child by the man she did not love.

"But let that rest for ever," I said,  
And bent my tread  
To the bedchamber above. 20

She took my hand in her thin white own,  
And smiled her thanks—though nigh too  
weak—

And made them a sign to leave us there,  
Then faltered, ere  
She could bring herself to speak. 25

"Just to see you—before I go—he'll condone  
Such a natural thing now my time's not  
much—

When Death is so near it hustles hence  
All passioned sense  
Between woman and man as such! 30

"My husband is absent. As heretofore  
The City detains him. But, in truth,  
He has not been kind. . . . I will  
speak no blame,

But—the child is lame;  
O, I pray she may reach his ruth! 35

"Forgive past days—I can say no more—  
Maybe had we wed you would now re-  
pine! . . .  
But I treated you ill. I was punished. Fare-  
well!

—Truth shall I tell? 39  
Would the child were yours and mine!

"As a wife I was true. But, such my unease  
That, could I insert a deed back in Time,  
I'd make her yours, to secure your care;  
And the scandal bear,  
And the penalty for the crime!" 45

—When I had left, and the swinging trees  
Rang above me, as lauding her candid say,  
Another was I. Her words were enough:  
Came smooth, came rough,  
I felt I could live my day. 50

Next night she died; and her obsequies  
In the Field of Tombs where the earthworks  
frowned

<sup>1</sup>The following poems are reprinted with the permission of the Macmillan Company. *Hap* and the three following pieces are from *Wessex Poems and Other Verses*.



Had her husband's heed. His tendance spent,  
I often went  
And pondered by her mound. 55

All that year and the next year whiled;  
And I still went thitherward in the gloam;  
But the Town forgot her and her nook,  
And her husband took  
Another Love to his home. 60

And the rumor flew that the lame lone child  
Whom she wished for its safety child of mine,  
Was treated ill when offspring came  
Of the new-made dame,  
And marked a more vigorous line. 65

A smarter grief within me wrought  
Than even at loss of her so dear  
That the being whose soul my soul suffused  
Had a child ill-used,  
While I dared not interfere! 70

One eve as I stood at my spot of thought  
In the white-stoned Garth,<sup>1</sup> brooding thus her  
wrong,  
Her husband neared; and to shun his nod  
By her hallowed sod  
I went from the tombs among 75

To the Cirque of the Gladiators which faced—  
That haggard mark of Imperial Rome,  
Whose Pagan echoes mock the chime  
Of our Christian time  
From its hollows of chalk and loam. 80

The sun's gold touch was scarce displaced  
From the vast Arena where men once bled,  
When her husband followed; bowed; half-  
passed  
With lip upcast;  
Then halting sullenly said: 85

"It is noised that you visit my first wife's  
tomb.  
Now, I gave her an honored name to bear  
While living, when dead. So I've claim to  
ask

By what right you task  
My patience by vigiling there? 90

"There's decency even in death, I assume;  
Preserve it, sir, and keep away;  
For the mother of my first-born you  
Show mind undue!  
—Sir, I've nothing more to say." 95

A desperate stroke discerned I then—  
God pardon—or pardon not—the lie;

She had sighed that she wished (lest the child  
should pine  
Of slights) 'twere mine,  
So I said: "But the father I. 100

"That you thought it yours is the way of men;  
But I won her troth long ere your day:  
You learned how, in dying, she summoned  
me?

'Twas in fealty.  
—Sir, I've nothing more to say, 105

"Save that, if you'll hand me my little maid,  
I'll take her, and rear her, and spare you toil.  
Think it more than a friendly act none can;  
I'm a lonely man,  
While you've a large pot to boil. 110

"If not, and you'll put it to ball or blade—  
To-night, to-morrow night, anywhen—  
I'll meet you here. . . . But think of it,  
And in season fit  
Let me hear from you again." 115

—Well, I went away, hoping; but nought I  
heard  
Of my stroke for the child, till there greeted me  
A little voice that one day came  
To my window-frame  
And babbled innocently: 120

"My father who's not my own, sends word  
I'm to stay here, sir, where I belong!"  
Next a writing came: "Since the child was the  
fruit

Of your lawless suit,  
Pray take her, to right a wrong." 125

And I did. And I gave the child my love,  
And the child loved me, and estranged us  
none.

But compunctions loomed; for I'd harmed the  
dead

By what I said  
For the good of the living one. 130

—Yet though, God wot, I am sinner enough,  
And unworthy the woman who drew me so,  
Perhaps this wrong for her darling's good  
She forgives, or would,  
If only she could know! 135

## NATURE'S QUESTIONING

WHEN I look forth at dawning, pool,  
Field, flock, and lonely tree,  
All seem to gaze at me  
Like chastened children sitting silent in a  
school;

<sup>1</sup>Enclosure.

Their faces dulled, constrained, and worn,  
 As though the master's ways 6  
 Through the long teaching days  
 Had cowed them till their early zest was  
 overborne.

Upon them stirs in lippings mere  
 (As if once clear in call, 10  
 But now scarce breathed at all)—  
 "We wonder, ever wonder, why we find us  
 here!

"Has some Vast Imbecility,  
 Mighty to build and blend,  
 But impotent to tend, 15  
 Framed us in jest, and left us now to haz-  
 ardry?

"Or come we of an Automaton  
 Unconscious of our pains? . . .  
 Or are we live remains  
 Of Godhead dying downwards, brain and eye  
 now gone? 20

"Or is it that some high Plan betides,  
 As yet not understood,  
 Of Evil stormed by Good,  
 We the Forlorn Hope over which Achieve-  
 ment strides?" 24

Thus things around. No answerer I. . .  
 Meanwhile the winds, and rains,  
 And Earth's old glooms and pains  
 Are still the same, and Life and Death are  
 neighbors nigh.

## THE SLOW NATURE

(AN INCIDENT OF FROMM VALLEY)

"THY husband—poor, poor Heart!—is dead!  
 Dead, out by Moreford Rise;  
 A bull escaped the barton-shed,<sup>1</sup>  
 Gored him, and there he lies!"

"Ha, ha—go away! 'Tis a tale, methink, 5  
 Thou joker Kit!" laughed she.  
 "I've known thee many a year, Kit Twink,  
 And ever hast thou fooled me!"

"But, Mistress Damon—I can swear 10  
 Thy goodman John is dead!  
 And soon th'lt hear their feet who bear  
 His body to his bed."

So unwontedly sad was the merry man's  
 face—  
 That face which had long deceived—  
 That she gazed and gazed; and then could  
 trace 15  
 The truth there; and she believed.

She laid a hand on the dresser-ledge,  
 And scanned far Egdon-side;  
 And stood; and you heard the wind-swept  
 sedge  
 And the rippling Froom; till she cried: 20

"O my chamber's untidied, unmade my bed,  
 Though the day has begun to wear!  
 'What a slovenly hussif!'" it will be said,  
 When they all go up my stair!"

She disappeared; and the joker stood 25  
 Depressed by his neighbor's doom,  
 And amazed that a wife struck to widowhood  
 Thought first of her unkempt room.

But a fortnight thence she could take no food,  
 And she pined in a slow decay; 30  
 While Kit soon lost his mournful mood  
 And laughed in his ancient way.

## GOD-FORGOTTEN<sup>3</sup>

I TOWERED far, and lo! I stood within  
 The presence of the Lord Most High,  
 Sent thither by the sons of Earth, to win  
 Some answer to their cry.

—"The Earth, sayest thou? The Human  
 race? 5  
 By Me created? Sad its lot?  
 Nay: I have no remembrance of such place:  
 Such world I fashioned not."—

—"O Lord, forgive me when I say 9  
 Thou spakest the word that made it all."—  
 "The Earth of men—let me bethink me. . .  
 Yea!  
 I dimly do recall

"Some tiny sphere I built long back  
 (Mid millions of such shapes of mine)  
 So named. . . It perished, surely—not a  
 wrack 15  
 Remaining, or a sign?"

"It lost my interest from the first,  
 My aims therefor succeeding ill;  
 Haply it died of doing as it durst?"—  
 "Lord, it existeth still." 20

"Dark, then, its life! For not a cry  
 Of aught it bears do I now hear;  
 Of its own act the threads were snapped  
 whereby  
 Its plaints had reached mine ear.

<sup>1</sup>Housewife.

<sup>2</sup>This and the following two pieces are from *Poems of the Past and the Present*.

<sup>1</sup>Farmyard-shed.

"It used to ask for gifts of good,  
Till came its severance, self-entailed,  
When sudden silence on that side ensued,  
And has till now prevailed. 25

"All other orbs have kept in touch;  
Their voicings reach me speedily: 30  
Thy people took upon them overmuch  
In sundering them from me!

"And it is strange—though sad enough—  
Earth's race should think that one whose  
call  
Frames, daily, shining spheres of flawless  
stuff 35  
Must heed their tainted ball! . . .

"But sayest it is by pangs distraught,  
And strife, and silent suffering?—  
Sore grieved am I that injury should be  
wrought  
Even on so poor a thing! 40

"Thou shouldst have learned that *Not to*  
*Mend*  
For Me could mean but *Not to Know*:  
Hence, Messengers! and straightway put an  
end  
To what men undergo." . . .

Homing at dawn, I thought to see 45  
One of the Messengers standing by.  
—Oh, childish thought! . . . Yet often  
it comes to me  
When trouble hovers nigh.

### ON A FINE MORNING

WHENCE comes Solace?—Not from seeing  
What is doing, suffering, being,  
Not from noting Life's conditions,  
Nor from heeding Time's monitions;  
But in cleaving to the Dream, 5  
And in gazing at the gleam  
Whereby gray things golden seem.

Thus do I this heyday, holding  
Shadows but as lights unfolding,  
As no specious show this moment 10  
With its iris-hued embowment;  
But as nothing other than  
Part of a benignant plan;  
Proof that earth was made for man.

### THE WELL-BELOVED

I WENT by star and planet shine  
Towards the dear one's home  
At Kingsbere, there to make her mine  
When the next sun upclomb.

I edged the ancient hill and wood 5  
Beside the Ikling Way,  
Nigh where the Pagan temple stood  
In the world's earlier day.

And as I quick and quicker walked  
On gravel and on green, 10  
I sang to sky, and tree, or talked  
Of her I called my queen.

—"O faultless is her dainty form,  
And luminous her mind;  
She is the God-created norm 15  
Of perfect womankind!"

A shape whereon one star-blink gleamed  
Slid softly by my side,  
A woman's; and her motion seemed 20  
The motion of my bride.

And yet methought she'd drawn erstwhile  
Out from the ancient leaze,<sup>1</sup>  
Where once were pile and peristyle  
For men's idolatries.

—"O maiden lithe and lone, what may 25  
Thy name and lineage be  
Who so resemblest by this ray  
My darling?—Art thou she?"

The Shape: "Thy bride remains within  
Her father's grange and grove." 30  
—"Thou speakest rightly," I broke in,  
"Thou art not she I love."

—"Nay: though thy bride remains inside  
Her father's walls," said she,  
"The one most dear is with thee here, 35  
For thou dost love but me."

Then I: "But she, my only choice,  
Is now at Kingsbere Grove?"  
Again her soft mysterious voice: 40  
"I am thy only Love."

Thus still she vouched, and still I said,  
"O sprite, that cannot be!" . . .  
It was as if my bosom bled, 44  
So much she troubled me.

The sprite resumed: "Thou hast transferred  
To her dull form awhile  
My beauty, fame, and deed, and word,  
My gestures and my smile.

"O fatuous man, this truth infer,  
Brides are not what they seem; 50  
Thou lovest what thou dreamest her;  
I am thy very dream!"

<sup>1</sup>Meadow-land, or common.



—“O then,” I answered miserably,  
Speaking as scarce I knew,  
“My loved one, I must wed with thee      55  
If what thou sayest be true!”

She, proudly, thinning in the gloom:  
“Though, since troth-plight began,  
I have ever stood as bride to groom,  
I wed no mortal man!”      60

Thereat she vanished by the lane  
Adjoining Kingsbere town,  
Near where, men say, once stood the Fane  
To Venus, on the Down.

—When I arrived and met my bride      65  
Her look was pinched and thin,  
As if her soul had shrunk and died,  
And left a waste within.

## THE CURATE'S KINDNESS<sup>1</sup>

### A WORKHOUSE IRONY

#### I

I THOUGHT they'd be strangers aroun' me,  
But she's to be there!  
Let me jump out o' wagon and go back and  
drown me  
At Pummery or Ten-Hatches Weir.

#### II

I thought: “Well, I've come to the Union—  
The workhouse at last—      6  
After honest hard work all the week, and  
Communion  
O' Zundays, these fifty years past.

#### III

“’Tis hard; but,” I thought, “never mind it:  
There's gain in the end:      10  
And when I get used to the place I shall find it  
A home, and may find there a friend.

#### IV

“Life there will be better than t'other,  
For peace is assured.  
*The men in one wing and their wives in another*  
Is strictly the rule of the Board.”      16

#### V

Just then one young Pa'son arriving  
Steps up out of breath  
To the side o' the wagon wherein we were  
driving  
To Union; and calls out and saith:      20

<sup>1</sup>This and the following five poems are from *Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses*.

#### VI

“Old folks, that harsh order is altered,  
Be not sick of heart!  
The Guardians they poohed and they pished  
and they paltered  
When urged not to keep you apart.

#### VII

“‘It is wrong,’ I maintained, ‘to divide them,  
Near forty years wed.’      26  
‘Very well, sir. We promise, then, they shall  
abide them  
In one wing together,’ they said.”

#### VIII

Then I sank—knew ’twas quite a foredone  
thing  
That misery should be      30  
To the end! . . . To get freed of her  
there was the one thing  
Had made the change welcome to me.

#### IX

To go there was ending but badly;  
’Twas shame and ’twas pain;  
“But anyhow,” thought I, “thereby I shall  
gladly      35  
Get free of this forty years’ chain.”

#### X

I thought they'd be strangers aroun' me,  
But she's to be there!  
Let me jump out o' wagon and go back and  
drown me  
At Pummery or Ten-Hatches Weir.      40

## THE DAWN AFTER THE DANCE

HERE is your parents' dwelling with its cur-  
tained windows telling  
Of no thought of us within it or of our arrival  
here;  
Their slumbers have been normal after one day  
more of formal  
Matrimonial commonplace and household  
life's mechanic gear.

I would be candid willingly, but dawn draws  
on so chillingly      5  
As to render further cheerlessness intolerable  
now,  
So I will not stand endeavoring to declare a  
day for severing,  
But will clasp you just as always—just the  
olden love avow.

Through serene and surly weather we have  
walked the ways together,  
And this long night's dance this year's end  
eve now finishes the spell; 10  
Yet we dreamed us but beginning a sweet  
sempiternal spinning  
Of a cord we have spun to breaking—to in-  
temperately, too well.

Yes; last night we danced I know, Dear, as  
we did that year ago, Dear,  
When a new strange bond between our days  
was formed, and felt, and heard;  
Would that dancing were the worst thing from  
the latest to the first thing 15  
That the faded year can charge us with; but  
what avails a word!

That which makes man's love the lighter and  
the woman's burn no brighter  
Came to pass with us inevitably while slipped  
the shortening year.  
And there stands your father's dwelling with  
its blind bleak windows telling  
That the vows of man and maid are frail as  
filmy gossamere. 20

### MISCONCEPTION

I BUSIED myself to find a sure  
Snug hermitage  
That should preserve my Love secure  
From the world's rage;  
Where no unseemly saturnals, 5  
Or strident traffic-roads,  
Or hum of interwolved cabals  
Should echo at her doors.

I labored that the diurnal spin  
Of vanities 10  
Should not contrive to suck her in  
By dark degrees,  
And cunningly operate to blur  
Sweet teachings I had begun;  
And then I went full-heart to her 15  
To expound the glad deeds done.

She looked at me, and said thereto  
With a pitying smile,  
"And *this* is what has busied you  
So long a while? 20  
O poor exhausted one, I see  
You have worn you old and thin  
For naught! Those moils you fear for me  
I find most pleasure in!"

### THE HOMECOMING

*Gruffly growled the wind on Toller downland  
broad and bare,  
And lonesome was the house, and dark; and few  
came there.*

"Now don't ye rub your eyes so red; we're  
home and have no cares;  
Here's a skimmer-cake for supper, peckled  
onions, and some pears;  
I've got a little keg o' summat strong, too,  
under stairs: 5  
—What, slight your husband's victuals?  
Other brides can tackle theirs!"

*The wind of winter mooded and mouthed their  
chimney like a horn,  
And round the house and past the house 'twas  
leafless and lorn,*

"But my dear and tender poppet, then, how  
came ye to agree  
In Ivel church this morning? Sure, there-  
right you married me!" 10  
—"Hoo-hoo!—I don't know—I forgot how  
strange and far 'twould be,  
An' I wish I was at home again with dear  
daddee!"

*Gruffly growled the wind on Toller downland  
broad and bare,  
And lonesome was the house and dark; and few  
came there.*

"I didn't think such furniture as this was all  
you'd own, 15  
And great black beams for ceiling, and a floor  
o' wretched stone,  
And nasty pewter platters, horrid forks of  
steel and bone,  
And a monstrous crock in chimney. 'Twas  
to me quite unbeknown!"

*Rattle rattle went the door; down flapped a cloud  
of smoke,  
As shifting north the wicked wind assayed a  
smarter stroke. 20*

"Now sit ye by the fire, poppet; put yourself  
at ease:  
And keep your little thumb out of your mouth,  
dear, please!  
And I'll sing to 'ee a pretty song of lovely  
flowers and bees,  
And happy lovers taking walks within a grove  
o' trees."

*Gruffly growled the wind on Toller Down, so  
bleak and bare, 25  
And lonesome was the house, and dark; and few  
came there.*

"Now, don't ye gnaw your handkercher;  
'twill hurt your little tongue,  
And if you do feel spitish, 'tis because ye are  
over young;  
But you'll be getting older, like us all, ere very  
long,  
And you'll see me as I am—a man who never  
did 'ee wrong." 30

*Straight from Whit'sheet Hill to Benvill Lane  
the blusters pass,  
Hitting hedges, milestones, handposts, trees, and  
tufts of grass.*

"Well, had I only known, my dear, that this  
was how you'd be,  
I'd have married her of riper years that was  
so fond of me.  
But since I can't, I've half a mind to run away  
to sea, 35  
And leave 'ee to go barefoot to your d—d  
daddee!"

*Up one wall and down the other—past each  
window-pane—  
Prance the gusts, and then away down Crimmer-  
crock's long lane.*

"I—I—don't know what to say to 't, since  
your wife I've vowed to be;  
And as 'tis done, I s'pose here I must bide—  
poor me! 40  
Aye—as you are ki-ki-kind, I'll try to live  
along with 'ee,  
Although I'd fain have stayed at home with  
dear daddee!"

*Gruffly growled the wind on Toller Down, so  
bleak and bare,  
And lonesome was the house and dark; and few  
came there.*

"That's right, my Heart! And though on  
haunted Toller Down we be, 45  
And the wind swears things in chimley, we'll  
to supper merrily!  
So don't ye tap your shoe so pettish-like; but  
smile at me,  
And ye'll soon forget to sock and sigh for dear  
daddee!"

### TO SINCERITY

O SWEET sincerity!—  
Where modern methods be  
What scope for thine and thee?

Life may be sad past saying,  
Its greens for ever graying,  
Its faiths to dust decaying;

And youth may have foreknown it,  
And riper seasons shown it,  
But custom cries: "Disown it:

"Say ye rejoice, though grieving, 10  
Believe, while unbelieving,  
Behold, without perceiving!"

—Yet, would men look at true things,  
And unilluded view things,  
And count to bear undue things, 15

The real might mend the seeming,  
Facts better their foredeeming,  
And Life its disesteeming.

### GEORGE MEREDITH

(1828–1909)

Forty years back, when much had place  
That since has perished out of mind,  
I heard that voice and saw that face.

He spoke as one afoot will wind  
A morning horn ere men awake; 5  
His note was trenchant, turning kind.

He was of those whose wit can shake  
And riddle to the very core  
The counterfeits that Time will break . . .

Of late, when we two met once more, 10  
The luminous countenance and rare  
Shone just as forty years before.

So that, when now all tongues declare  
His shape unseen by his green hill,<sup>1</sup>  
I scarce believe he sits not there. 15

No matter. Further and further still  
Through the world's vaporious vitiating air  
His words wing on—as live words will.

### THE FACE AT THE CASEMENT<sup>2</sup>

IF EVER joy leave  
An abiding sting of sorrow,  
So befell it on the morrow  
Of that May eve. . . .

The traveled sun dropped 5  
To the north-west, low and lower,  
The pony's trot grew slower,  
Until we stopped.

<sup>1</sup>Box Hill, Surrey, where his home was.

<sup>2</sup>This and the following four poems are from *Satires of Circumstance. Lyrics and Reveries*.



"This cozy house just by  
I must call at for a minute,  
A sick man lies within it  
Who soon will die. 10

"He wished to—marry me,  
So I am bound, when I drive near him,  
To inquire, if but to cheer him,  
How he may be." 15

A message was sent in,  
And wordlessly we waited,  
Till some one came and stated  
The bulletin. 20

And that the sufferer said,  
For her call no words could thank her;  
As his angel he must rank her  
Till life's spark fled.

Slowly we drove away,  
When I turned my head, although not  
Called to: why I turned I know not  
Even to this day: 25

And lo, there in my view  
Pressed against an upper lattice  
Was a white face, gazing at us  
As we withdrew. 30

And well did I divine  
It to be the man's there dying,  
Who but lately had been sighing  
For her pledged mine. 35

Then I deigned a deed of hell;  
It was done before I knew it;  
What devil made me do it  
I cannot tell! 40

Yes, while he gazed above,  
I put my arm about her  
That he might see, nor doubt her  
My plighted Love.

The pale face vanished quick,  
As if blasted, from the casement,  
And my shame and self-abasement  
Began their prick. 45

And they prick on, ceaselessly,  
For that stab in Love's fierce fashion  
Which, unfired by lover's passion,  
Was foreign to me. 50

She smiled at my caress,  
But why came the soft embowment  
Of her shoulder at that moment  
She did not guess. 55

Long long years has he lain  
In thy garth, O sad Saint Cleather:  
What tears there, bared to weather,  
Will cleanse that stain! 60

Love is long-suffering, brave,  
Sweet, prompt, precious as a jewel;  
But jealousy is cruel,  
Cruel as the grave!

# LOST LOVE

I PLAY my sweet old airs—  
The airs he knew  
When our love was true—  
But he does not balk  
His determined walk,  
And passes up the stairs. 5

I sing my songs once more,  
And presently hear  
His footstep near  
As if it would stay;  
But he goes his way,  
And shuts a distant door. 10

So I wait for another morn,  
And another night  
In this soul-sick blight;  
And I wonder much  
As I sit, why such  
A woman as I was born! 15

# AH, ARE YOU DIGGING ON MY GRAVE?

"AH, ARE you digging on my grave  
My loved one?—planting rue?"  
—"No: yesterday he went to wed  
One of the brightest wealth has bred.  
'It cannot hurt her now,' he said,  
'That I should not be true.'" 5

"Then who is digging on my grave?  
My nearest dearest kin?"  
—"Ah, no: they sit and think, 'What use!  
What good will planting flowers produce?  
No tendance of her mound can loose  
Her spirit from Death's gin.'" 10

"But some one digs upon my grave?  
My enemy?—prodding sly?"  
—"Nay: when she heard you had passed the  
Gate  
That shuts on all flesh soon or late,  
She thought you no more worth her hate,  
And cares not where you lie." 15

"Then, who is digging on my grave?  
Say—since I have not guessed!" 20  
—"Oh it is I, my mistress dear,  
Your little dog, who still lives near,  
And much I hope my movements here  
Have not disturbed your rest?"

"Ah, yes! You dig upon my grave . . . 25  
Why flashed it not on me  
That one true heart was left behind!  
What feeling do we ever find  
To equal among human kind  
A dog's fidelity!" 30

"Mistress, I dug upon your grave  
To bury a bone, in case  
I should be hungry near this spot  
When passing on my daily trot.  
I am sorry, but I quite forgot 35  
It was your resting-place."

### THE SWEET HUSSY

IN HIS early days he was quite surprised  
When she told him she was compromised  
By meetings and lingerings at his whim,  
And thinking not of herself but him;  
While she lifted orbs aggrieved and round 5  
That scandal should so soon abound  
(As she had raised them to nine or ten  
Of antecedent nice young men):  
And in remorse he thought with a sigh,  
How good she is, and how bad am I!— 10  
It was years before he understood  
That she was the wicked one—he the good.

### YOU WERE THE SORT THAT MEN FORGET<sup>1</sup>

You were the sort that men forget;  
Though I—not yet!—  
Perhaps not ever. Your slighted weakness  
Adds to the strength of my regret!

You'd not the art—you never had 5  
For good or bad—  
To make men see how sweet your meaning,  
Which, visible, had charmed them glad.

You would, by words inept let fall, 10  
Offend them all,  
Even if they saw your warm devotion  
Would hold your life's blood at their call.

You lacked the eye to understand  
Those friends offhand  
Whose mode was crude, though whose dim  
purport 15  
Outpriced the courtesies of the bland.

I am now the only being who  
Remembers you  
It may be. What a waste that Nature  
Grudged soul so dear the art its due! 20

### TO THE MOON

"WHAT have you looked at, Moon,  
In your time,  
Now long past your prime?"  
"O, I have looked at, often looked at 5  
Sweet, sublime,  
Sore things, shudderful, night and noon  
In my time."

"What have you mused on, Moon,  
In your day,  
So aloof, so far away?" 10  
"O, I have mused on, often mused on  
Growth, decay,  
Nations alive, dead, mad, aswoon,  
In my day!"

"Have you much wondered, Moon, 15  
On your rounds,  
Self-wrapt, beyond Earth's bounds?"  
"Yea, I have wondered, often wondered  
At the sounds 20  
Reaching me of the human tune  
On my rounds."

"What do you think of it, Moon,  
As you go?  
Is Life much or no?" 25  
"O, I think of it, often think of it  
As a show  
God ought surely to shut up soon,  
As I go."

### THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

THIS statue of Liberty, busy man,  
Here erect in the city square,  
I have watched while your scrubbings, this  
early morning,  
Strangely wistful, 5  
And half tristful,  
Have turned her from foul to fair;

With your bucket of water, and mop, and  
brush,  
Bringing her out of the grime

<sup>1</sup>This and the following poems are from *Moments of Vision*  
and *Miscellaneous Verses*.

That has smeared her during the smokes of  
winter  
With such glumness 10  
In her dumbness,  
And aged her before her time.

You have washed her down with motherly  
care—  
Head, shoulders, arm, and foot,  
To the very hem of the robes that drape her—  
All expertly 16  
And alertly,  
Till a long stream, black with soot,

Flows over the pavement to the road,  
And her shape looms pure as snow: 20  
I read you are hired by the City guardians—  
May be yearly,  
Or once merely—  
To treat the statues so? "

"Oh, I'm not hired by the Councilmen 25  
To cleanse the statues here.  
I do this one as a self-willed duty,  
Not as paid to,  
Or at all made to,  
But because the doing is dear." 30

Ah, then I hail you brother and friend!  
Liberty's knight divine.  
What you have done would have been my  
doing,  
Yea, most verily,  
Well, and thoroughly, 35  
Had but your courage been mine!

"Oh I care not for Liberty's mold,  
Liberty charms not me;  
What's Freedom but an idler's vision,  
Vain, pernicious, 40  
Often vicious,  
Of things that cannot be!

"Memory it is that brings me to this—  
Of a daughter—my one sweet own.  
She grew a famous carver's model, 45  
One of the fairest  
And of the rarest:—  
She sat for the figure as shown.

"But alas, she died in this distant place  
Before I was warned to betake 50  
Myself to her side! . . . And in love  
of my darling,  
In love of the fame of her,  
And the good name of her,  
I do this for her sake."

Answer I gave not. Of that form 55  
The carver was I at his side;  
His child, my model, held so saintly,  
Grand in feature,  
Gross in nature,  
In the dens of vice had died. 60

## LIFE LAUGHS ONWARD

RAMBLING I looked for an old abode  
Where, years back, one had lived I knew;  
Its site a dwelling duly showed,  
But it was new.

I went where, not so long ago, 5  
The sod had riven two breasts asunder;  
Daisies thrived gayly there, as though  
No grave were under.

I walked along a terrace where  
Loud children gamboled in the sun; 10  
The figure that had once sat there  
Was missed by none.

Life laughed and moved on unsubdued,  
I saw that Old succumbed to Young:  
'Twas well. My too regretful mood 15  
Died on my tongue.



## ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN (1859—)

Mr. Housman was born in Shropshire on 26 March, 1859. He received his earlier education at the Bromsgrove School, and then entered St. John's College, Oxford. After leaving Oxford he held a post in H. M. Patent Office from 1882 until 1892. He then was appointed Professor of Latin in University College, London, and remained in this position until 1911, when he became Professor of Latin and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge University—a post which he now holds. He is also an Honorary Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford. He has published many papers in several classical journals, and has also published editions of Manilius (1903–1920), of Juvenal (1905), and of Lucan (1926). His fame, of course, has arisen from his verse, printed in two small volumes, *A Shropshire Lad* (1896) and *Last Poems* (1922) which are known and valued wherever English is spoken.

The one hundred and five poems contained in these volumes inevitably remind one of Thomas Hardy's poetry, because the two men are of like temper; but "Mr. Housman's verse is as perfect

in form as the older poet's is often hammered and uneven. . . . The reflective melancholy, the faithlessness in the immortalities, with which nearly all his poetry is informed, has no sentimentality or morbid pettiness. . . . In Mr. Housman's world the gods kill us for their sport and life is an irony; as often as not the reward is given to him who did not toil, and the bride lies by another while the green grass and clover grow above her lover. . . . Nearly all his poetry is of the dales and woodlands of Shropshire, of the life of the people on the soil and in the market town, but it is not a pastoral poetry. His language is entirely simple, he writes of the primitive and changeless in life, but his simplicity is that of the cultivated and thoughtful mind holding itself aloof. He uses ballad measure, but his thought is elegiac; no impassioned emotion sways him to the loss of his soul. . . . Few volumes of poetry published within the last quarter of a century possess qualities which make for enduring life as do Mr. Housman's two books of verse." (Harold Williams, *Modern English Writers*.)

### A SHROPSHIRE LAD<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. REVEILLE

WAKE: the silver dusk returning  
Up the beach of darkness brims,  
And the ship of sunrise burning  
Strands upon the eastern rims.

Wake: the vaulted shadow shatters, 5  
Trampled to the floor it spanned,  
And the tent of night in tatters  
Straws the sky-pavilioned land.

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying;  
Hear the drums of morning play; 10  
Hark, the empty highways crying  
"Who'll beyond the hills away?"

Towns and countries woo together,  
Forelands beacon, belfries call;  
Never lad that trod on leather 15  
Lived to feast his heart with all.

Up, lad: thews that lie and cumber  
Sunlit pallets never thrive;

Morns abed and daylight slumber  
Were not meant for man alive. 20

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;  
Breath's a ware that will not keep.  
Up, lad: when the journey's over  
There'll be time enough to sleep.

#### VIII

"FAREWELL to barn and stack and tree,  
Farewell to Severn shore.  
Terence, look your last at me,  
For I come home no more.

"The sun burns on the half-mown hill, 5  
By now the blood is dried;  
And Maurice amongst the hay lies still  
And my knife is in his side.

"My mother thinks us long away;  
'Tis time the field were mown. 10  
She had two sons at rising day,  
To-night she'll be alone.

"And here's a bloody hand to shake,  
And oh, man, here's good-bye;  
We'll sweat no more on scythe and rake, 15  
My bloody hands and I.

<sup>1</sup>The poems here printed from this volume and from *Last Poems* are used with the permission of Professor Housman and of Messrs. Henry Holt and Company.

"I wish you strength to bring you pride,  
And a love to keep you clean,  
And I wish you luck, come Lammastide,  
At racing on the green."

20

"Long for me the rick will wait,  
And long will wait the fold,  
And long will stand the empty plate,  
And dinner will be cold."

## XXXIV. THE NEW MISTRESS

*"Oh, sick I am to see you, will you never let me  
be?"*

*You may be good for something but you are not  
good for me.*

*Oh, go where you are wanted, for you are not  
wanted here."*

And that was all the farewell when I parted  
from my dear.

"I will go where I am wanted, to a lady born  
and bred

5

Who will dress me free for nothing in a uniform  
of red;

She will not be sick to see me if I only keep  
it clean:

I will go where I am wanted for a soldier of  
the Queen.

"I will go where I am wanted, for the sergeant  
does not mind;

He may be sick to see me but he treats me very  
kind:

10

He gives me beer and breakfast and a ribbon  
for my cap,

And I never knew a sweetheart spend her  
money on a chap.

"I will go where I am wanted, where there's  
room for one or two,

And the men are none too many for the work  
there is to do;

Where the standing line wears thinner and the  
dropping dead lie thick;

15

And the enemies of England they shall see me  
and be sick."

## XLVIII

BE STILL, my soul, be still; the arms you bear  
are brittle,

Earth and high heaven are fixed of old and  
founded strong.

Think rather,—call to thought, if now you  
grieve a little,

The days when we had rest, O soul, for they  
were long.

Men loved unkindness then, but lightless in  
the quarry

I slept and saw not; tears fell down, I did  
not mourn;

Sweat ran and blood sprang out and I was  
never sorry:

Then it was well with me, in days ere I was  
born.

Now, and I muse for why and never find the  
reason,

I pace the earth, and drink the air, and feel  
the sun.

10

Be still, be still, my soul; it is but for a season:

Let us endure an hour and see injustice  
done.

Aye, look: high heaven and earth ail from the  
prime foundation;

All thoughts to rive the heart are here, and all  
are vain:

Horror and scorn and hate and fear and indig-  
nation—

15

Oh why did I awake? when shall I sleep  
again?

## LXII

"TERENCE, this is stupid stuff:

You eat your victuals fast enough;

There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,

To see the rate you drink your beer.

But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,

5

It gives a chap the belly-ache.

The cow, the old cow, she is dead;

It sleeps well, the horned head:

We poor lads, 'tis our turn now

To hear such tunes as killed the cow.

10

Pretty friendship 'tis to rime

Your friends to death before their time

Moping melancholy mad:

Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad."

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,

15

There's brisker pipes than poetry.

Say, for what were hop-yards meant,

Or why was Burton built on Trent?

Oh many a peer of England brews

Livelier liquor than the Muse,

20

And malt does more than Milton can

To justify God's ways to man.

Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink

For fellows whom it hurts to think:

Look into the pewter pot

25

To see the world as the world's not.

And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past:

The mischief is that 'twill not last.

Oh I have been to Ludlow fair

And left my necktie God knows where,

30

And carried half way home, or near,

Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer:

Then the world seemed none so bad,  
 And I myself a sterling lad;  
 And down in lovely muck I've lain, 35  
 Happy till I woke again.  
 Then I saw the morning sky:  
 Heigho, the tale was all a lie;  
 The world, it was the old world yet,  
 I was I, my things were wet, 40  
 And nothing now remained to do  
 But begin the game anew.

Therefore, since the world has still  
 Much good, but much less good than ill,  
 And while the sun and moon endure 45  
 Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,  
 I'd face it as a wise man would,  
 And train for ill and not for good.  
 'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale  
 Is not so brisk a brew as ale; 50  
 Out of a stem that scored the hand  
 I wrung it in a weary land.  
 But take it: if the smack is sour,  
 The better for the embittered hour;  
 It should do good to heart and head 55  
 When your soul is in my soul's stead;  
 And I will friend you, if I may  
 In the dark and cloudy day.

There was a king reigned in the East:  
 There, when kings will sit to feast,  
 They get their fill before they think 60  
 With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.  
 He gathered all that springs to birth  
 From the many-venomed earth;  
 First a little, thence to more, 65  
 He sampled all her killing store;  
 And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,  
 Sate the king when healths went round.  
 They put arsenic in his meat  
 And stared aghast to watch him eat; 70  
 They poured strychnine in his cup  
 And shook to see him drink it up:  
 They shook, they stared as white's their shirt:  
 Them it was their poison hurt.  
 —I tell the tale that I heard told. 75  
 Mithridates, he died old.

## LAST POEMS

### VII

IN VALLEYS green and still  
 Where lovers wander maying  
 They hear from over hill  
 A music playing.  
 Behind the drum and fife, 5  
 Past hawthornwood and hollow,  
 Through earth and out of life  
 The soldiers follow.

The soldier's is the trade:  
 In any wind or weather 10  
 He steals the heart of maid  
 And man together.

The lover and his lass  
 Beneath the hawthorn lying  
 Have heard the soldiers pass, 15  
 And both are sighing.

And down the distance they  
 With dying note and swelling  
 Walk the resounding way  
 To the still dwelling. 20

### IX

THE chestnut casts his flambeaux, and the  
 flowers  
 Stream from the hawthorn on the wind  
 away,  
 The doors clap to, the pane is blind with  
 showers.  
 Pass me the can, lad; there's an end of May.

There's one spoilt spring to scant our mortal  
 lot, 5  
 One season ruined of our little store.  
 May will be fine next year as like as not:  
 Oh, aye, but then we shall be twenty-four.

We for a certainty are not the first  
 Have sat in taverns while the tempest  
 hurled 10  
 Their hopeful plans to emptiness, and cursed  
 Whatever brute and blackguard made the  
 world.

It is in truth iniquity on high  
 To cheat our sentenced souls of aught they  
 crave,  
 And mar the merriment as you and I 15  
 Fare on our long fool's-errand to the grave.

Iniquity it is; but pass the can.  
 My lad, no pair of kings our mothers bore;  
 Our only portion is the estate of man:  
 We want the moon, but we shall get no  
 more. 20

If here to-day the cloud of thunder lours  
 To-morrow it will hie on far behests;  
 The flesh will grieve on other bones than ours  
 Soon, and the soul will mourn in other  
 breasts.

The troubles of our proud and angry dust 25  
 Are from eternity, and shall not fail.



Bear them we can, and if we can we must.  
Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your  
ale.

## XI

YONDER see the morning blink:  
The sun is up, and up must I,  
To wash and dress and eat and drink

And look at things and talk and think  
And work, and God knows why. 5

Oh often have I washed and dressed  
And what's to show for all my pain?  
Let me lie abed and rest:  
Ten thousand times I've done my best  
And all's to do again. 10



INDEX OF AUTHORS, TITLES, AND FIRST LINES OF POEMS





# INDEX OF AUTHORS, TITLES, AND FIRST LINES OF POEMS

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